KISS KISS BANG BANG™

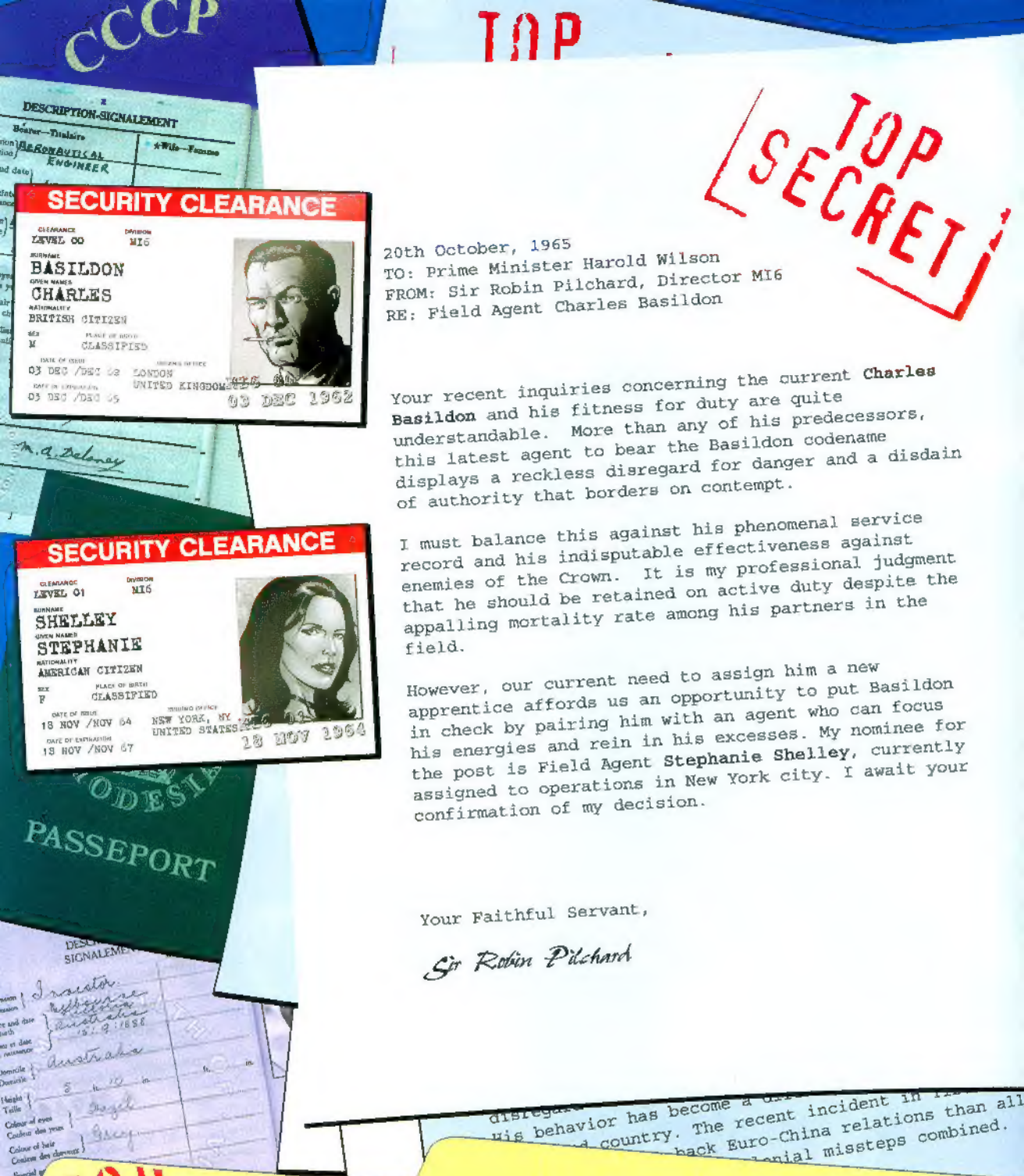
#1

CrossGen

FEB 2004

DEADSHOT

BEDARD
PERKINS
HENNESSY
VILLARI



20th October, 1965
TO: Prime Minister Harold Wilson
FROM: Sir Robin Pilchard, Director MI6
RE: Field Agent Charles Basildon

Your recent inquiries concerning the current **Charles Basildon** and his fitness for duty are quite understandable. More than any of his predecessors, this latest agent to bear the Basildon codename displays a reckless disregard for danger and a disdain of authority that borders on contempt.

I must balance this against his phenomenal service record and his indisputable effectiveness against enemies of the Crown. It is my professional judgment that he should be retained on active duty despite the appalling mortality rate among his partners in the field.

However, our current need to assign him a new apprentice affords us an opportunity to put Basildon in check by pairing him with an agent who can focus his energies and rein in his excesses. My nominee for the post is Field Agent **Stephanie Shelley**, currently assigned to operations in New York city. I await your confirmation of my decision.

Your Faithful Servant,

Sir Robin Pilchard

his behavior has become a
country. The recent incident in
back Euro-China relations than all
missteps combined.

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Cambodia
1965
...AND WHAT OF OUR TROUBLESOME MISTER *BASILDON*?
I LEFT HIM BACK AT THE BANGKOK HILTON.
HE SAID *MANY* INTERESTING THINGS DURING OUR NIGHT TOGETHER. I BELIEVE HE WAS TRYING TO *IMPRESS* ME.
AND... HOW IMPRESSIVE *WAS* HE?
NOT *VERY*--!
HE SUSPECTS YOU'RE SETTING UP A NUCLEAR MUNITIONS FACTORY *SOMEWHERE* IN THE REGION. HE'S MOUNTING A SEARCH NEAR PHUKET.
Heh...
STILL SMOKING THOSE WRETCHED COUNTERFEIT *GALOIS*, LaCHANCE? HELL OF A CHOICE FOR A CONDEMNED MAN'S *LAST* CIGARETTE...
MERDE!

PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE ONE OF MY SILK CUT?
I'LL TRADE YOU FOR A LIGHT...
BASILDON! HOW DID YOU FIND US?!
JUST FOLLOWED THE HOMING BEACON I PLANTED ON YOUR LITTLE FORTUNE COOKIE.
WHERE?
A GENTLEMAN WOULD NEVER TELL.
=GROAN=
AH-AH, MONSIEUR BASILDON. IT APPEARS WE HAVE A STANDOFF...

WE HAVEN'T TIME TO *WASTE* ON THIS CHARADE, LaCHANCE...
...YOU SEE, *AGENT SMYTHE* AND I HAVE CALLED IN AN *AIRSTRIKE*.
AS WE SPEAK, A PAIR OF DeHAVILLAND VAMPIRES LAUNCHED FROM *H.M.S. ILLUSTRIOUS* ARE VECTORING IN ON THIS LOCATION.
"IN MINUTES, THIS LITTLE *H-BOMB FACTORY* YOU'RE BUILDING FOR YOUR FRIEND, POL POT, IS GOING TO BE A RATHER EXPENSIVE *BONFIRE*..."
...SO, YOU'LL FORGIVE ME IF I *SKIP* THE USUAL NICETIES AND *PUT PAID* TO MY MISSION?
YOU ARE *BLUFFING, MON AMI.*
ONCE A MAN SHARES *L'AMOUR* WITH A WOMAN LIKE SUKI, HER LIFE BECOMES PRECIOUS TO HIM.

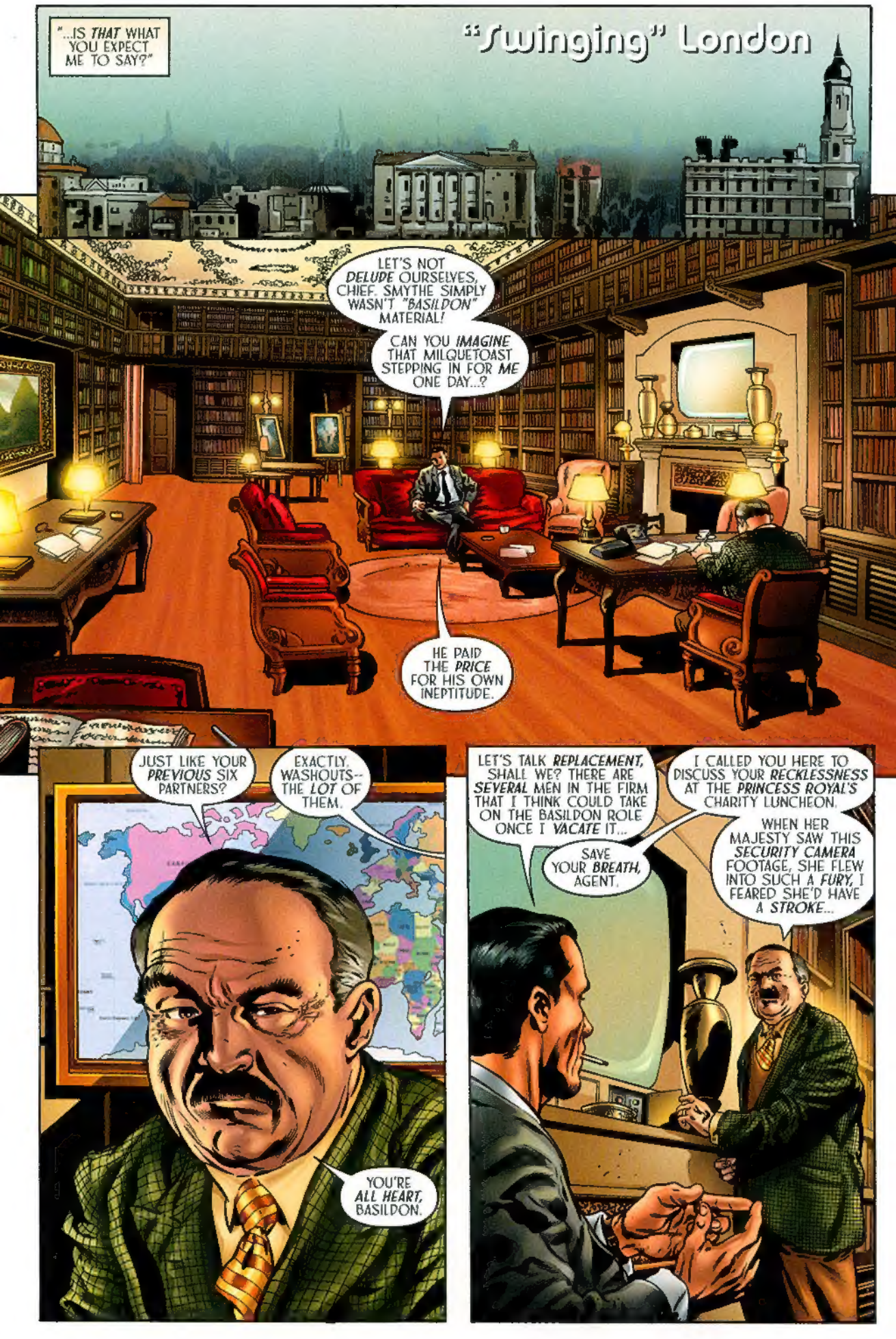
Oh, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE—!
IDIOT. WHY WOULD I SPARE THE GIRL IF I'D ALREADY HAD HER?
BLOODY HELL, CHARLES! WHAT'VE YOU DONE?!
<HALT!>
I KNOW, SMYTHE, I KNOW...
"...SHOULD'VE NICKED HIS LIGHTER BEFORE I SHOT HIM!"

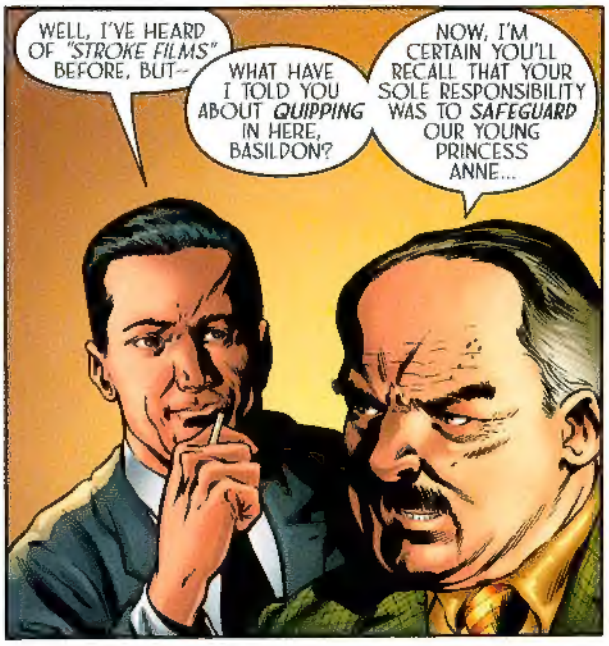
CrossGen Comics presents:
URK
THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS SPY
SIR CHARLES BASILDON
AGENT OF THE CROWN
IN HIS MOST SHOCKING ADVENTURE EVER...

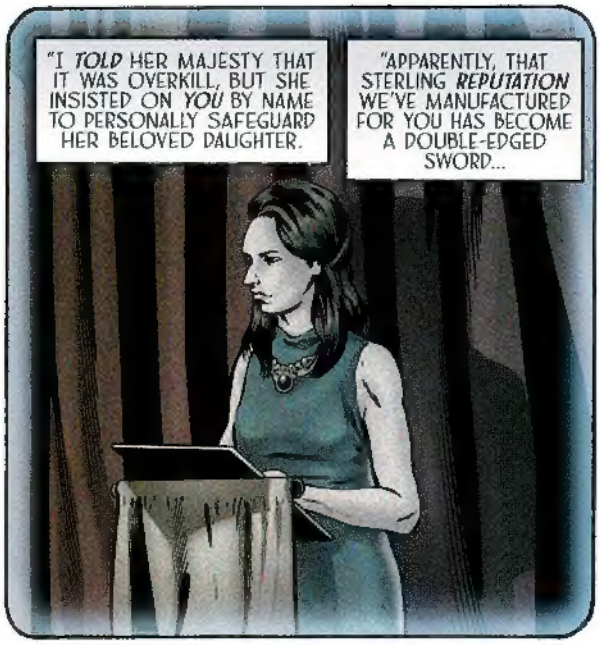
KISS KISS BANG BANG

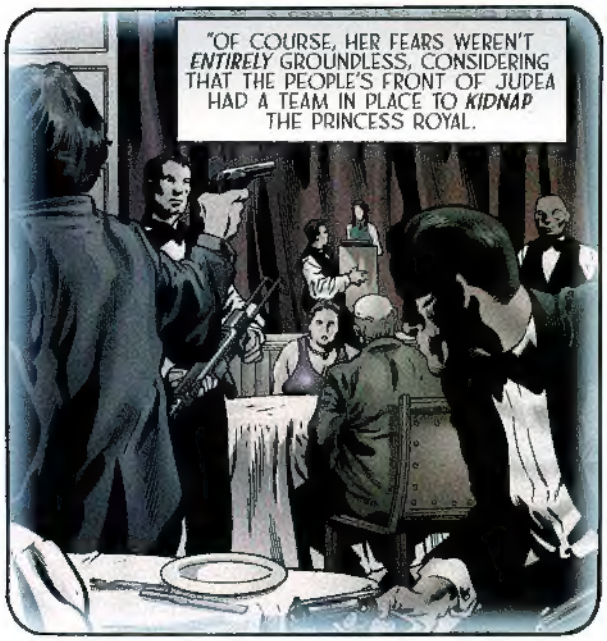
words TONY BEDARD
pictures MIKE PERKINS
inks ANDREW HENNESSY
colors LAURA VILLARI
letters DAVE LANPHEAR

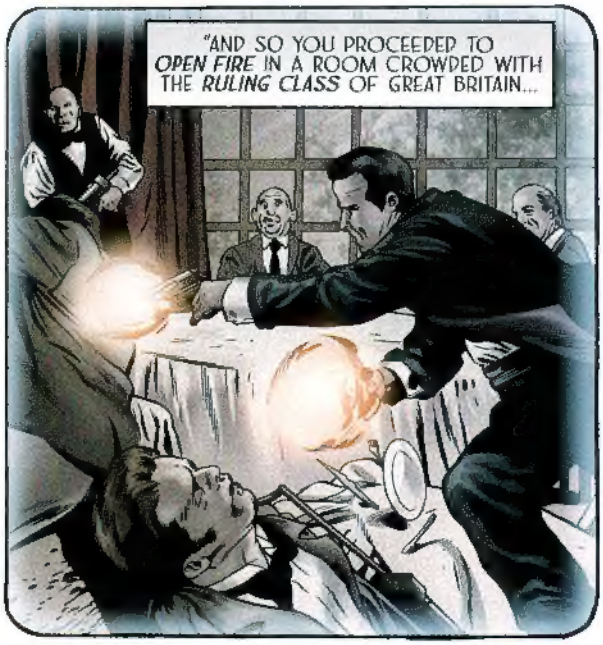
"THE DEATH OF AGENT WINSLOW SMYTHE WAS A GREAT LOSS TO MI6, A CRUEL BLOW FROM WHICH I'LL NOT SOON RECOVER..."

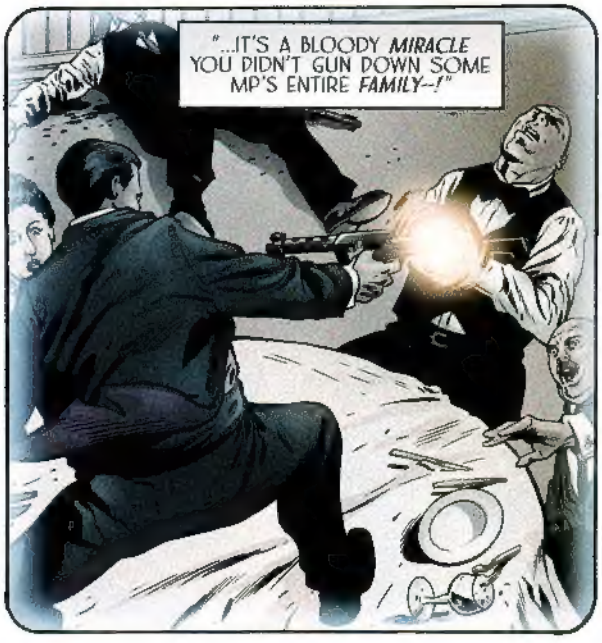

"...IS *THAT* WHAT YOU EXPECT ME TO SAY?"
"Swinging" London
LET'S NOT *DELUDE* OURSELVES, CHIEF. SMYTHE SIMPLY WASN'T *"BASILDON"* MATERIAL!
CAN YOU *IMAGINE* THAT MILQUETOAST STEPPING IN FOR *ME* ONE DAY...?
HE PAID THE *PRICE* FOR HIS OWN INEPTITUDE.
JUST LIKE YOUR *PREVIOUS* SIX PARTNERS?
EXACTLY. WASHOUTS--THE *LOT* OF THEM.
YOU'RE *ALL HEART*, BASILDON.
LET'S TALK *REPLACEMENT*, SHALL WE? THERE ARE *SEVERAL* MEN IN THE FIRM THAT I THINK COULD TAKE ON THE BASILDON ROLE ONCE I *VACATE* IT...
SAVE YOUR *BREATH*, AGENT.
I CALLED YOU HERE TO DISCUSS YOUR *RECKLESSNESS* AT THE *PRINCESS ROYAL'S* CHARITY LUNCHEON.
WHEN HER MAJESTY SAW THIS *SECURITY CAMERA* FOOTAGE, SHE FLEW INTO SUCH A *FURY*, I FEARED SHE'D HAVE A *STROKE*...


WELL, I'VE HEARD OF "STROKE FILMS" BEFORE, BUT--
WHAT HAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT QUIPPING IN HERE, BASILDON?
NOW, I'M CERTAIN YOU'LL RECALL THAT YOUR SOLE RESPONSIBILITY WAS TO SAFEGUARD OUR YOUNG PRINCESS ANNE...


"I TOLD HER MAJESTY THAT IT WAS OVERKILL, BUT SHE INSISTED ON YOU BY NAME TO PERSONALLY SAFEGUARD HER BELOVED DAUGHTER.
"APPARENTLY, THAT STERLING REPUTATION WE'VE MANUFACTURED FOR YOU HAS BECOME A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD...


"OF COURSE, HER FEARS WEREN'T ENTIRELY GROUNDLESS, CONSIDERING THAT THE PEOPLE'S FRONT OF JUDEA HAD A TEAM IN PLACE TO KIDNAP THE PRINCESS ROYAL.


"AND SO YOU PROCEEDED TO OPEN FIRE IN A ROOM CROWDED WITH THE RULING CLASS OF GREAT BRITAIN...


"...IT'S A BLOODY MIRACLE YOU DIDN'T GUN DOWN SOME MP'S ENTIRE FAMILY--!"

THE POINT IS THAT I DIDN'T, DID I?
I DISPATCHED EVERY LAST ONE OF THOSE BLOKES WITH ZERO COLLATERAL CASUALTIES.
IS THAT WHAT MADE THE QUEEN SO CROSS?

NO, SHE WAS QUITE *PLEASED* THAT YOU THWARTED THE BLIGHTERS
" IT'S WHAT YOU DID *AFTER* THAT RAISED HER IRE
"SEE HERE.. ON CAMERA *TWO*
"NEED I *REMIND* YOU THAT AN AGENT OF THE CROWN MUST *NEVER* '*COP A FEEL*' OFF A ROYAL BACKSIDE?"
I DIDN'T HEAR *HER* COMPLAIN
THE QUEEN HAS ASKED DOWNING STREET TO EITHER *CIVILISE* YOU OR *REPLACE* YOU!
DON'T MAKE THREATS YOU CAN'T BACK UP I'M IRREPLACEABLE, AND YOU *KNOW* IT
NOW, *WHO* IS GOING TO FILL IN FOR SMYTHE, IF NOT ONE OF MY PICKS?

YOU'LL MEET YOUR NEW PARTNER AT THE COSTUME BALL THE SWISS CONSULATE IS THROWING TONIGHT
MISS POUNDSTONE WILL GIVE YOU YOUR INVITATION ON YOUR WAY OUT
THE CODE PHRASE IS "TWINKLETOES." YOU REPLY WITH "GOLDENROD." GOT IT?
=SIGH= GOT IT
TOP SECRET
PERSONNEL FILE:
Shelley, Stephanie J.
IF ANYONE CAN CIVILISE THAT MONSTER IT'S YOU, MY DEAR
PROVIDED, OF COURSE, HE DOESN'T GET YOU KILLED FIRST
TOP SECRET
PERSONNEL FILE

A SCOPE JUST A SIMPLE AND CONTACT FREE OF CHARGE
The Swiss Embassy
8:00 PM
TWINKLETOES
SORRY, NO
BOND STREET, ACTUALLY
I SAY, IS THERE A "TWINKLETOES" STATION ?
NEVER MIND

TWINKLETOES ?
TWINKLETOES
TWINKLETOES!
SHEPHERD'S BUSH?
WHAT?
JUST HAZARDING A GUESS YOU'RE DRESSED AS SHEPHERD'S BUSH STATION
YEAH YOU'RE THE FIRST TO GUESS IT RIGHT
HI I'M STEPHANIE SHELLEY

YOU'RE A YANK?
ACTUALLY, I WAS BORN HERE, BUT RAISED IN THE STATES
THEN THIS WHOLE NOTION OF A COSTUME BALL WHERE EVERYONE COMES DRESSED AS A LONDON TUBE STATION MUST STRIKE YOU AS A BIT DAFT
TELL ME ABOUT IT! IF WE TRIED THIS BACK IN NEW YORK, YOU'D HAVE TO SHOW UP DRESSED IN SUBWAY TILE AND URINE
CHARMING MIGHT MAKE A WELCOME CHANGE FROM ALL THE VICTORIA STATIONS AND PICCADILLY CIRCUSES
OR WOULD THAT BE CIRC[illegible]?
YOU'RE A STRANGE ONE, MISTER--
ARE YOU WITH THE EMBASSY, OR JUST HERE TO MEET A FRIEND?
YOU COULD SAY I'M HERE TO MEET A FRIEND MORE LIKE A COWORKER, ACTUALLY ONLY I'M NOT HAVING MUCH LUCK
MIGHT I BE OF SOME ASSISTANCE?
NOT REALLY JUST KEEPING ME COMPANY FOR A WHILE IS FINE
MY PLEASURE

10:00 PM
AND SO I SUMMER IN TUSCANY, BUT TO ME THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE LONDON
1:00 AM
ANY LUCK?
NOPE I EVEN CHECKED THE LOBBY
2:00 AM
MAYBE THIS WAS JUST A *TEST* THEY DO THAT SOMETIMES RATTLE YOUR CHAINS JUST TO SEE WHAT YOU DO
HOW *RUDE*
YEAH, MY COMPANY'S WEIRD LIKE THAT
SORRY I WASN'T MORE *HELPFUL*, MISS SHELLEY MAY I.
=Ahem= MAY I OFFER YOU A *NIGHTCAP*--TAKE SOME OF THE *STING* OUT OF THIS DISAPPOINTING TURN?
SURE WHY NOT? I JUST
WAIT A MINUTE
TWINKLETOES?
IF YOU'RE ASKING "*CAN I DANCE?*", I'M AFRAID THE ANSWER'S *NO*.
BUT I DO PREPARE A CRACKING *BREAKFAST*
DON'T GET ANY BIG IDEAS.

oOOOOHHH..
..HOW MUCH DID WE DRINK ?
YOU KNOW, I'VE NEVER DONE THIS WITH SOMEONE I JUST MET
LAST NIGHT SEEMED UNUSUALLY TENSE FOR YOU I'LL REFRAIN FROM DRAWING ANY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER
Uh THANKS
I MIGHT HAVE SOME FREE TIME ON MY HANDS IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ME AGAIN - Y KNOW, IN CASE I GET CANNED THE MINUTE I SHOW UP FOR WORK TODAY
Ah, YES-- THE MISSED RENDEZVOUS LAST NIGHT. I'M QUITE CERTAIN THEY'LL UNDERSTAND IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT
YOU'RE SWEET
BY THE WAY, I'M SOOO SORRY, BUT .WHAT'S YOUR NAME AGAIN ?

"GOLDENROD"
YOU SONOVA !
YOU DIDN'T LET ON WHO YOU WERE, JUST TO GET ME IN THE SACK?!
AND I'M SUPPOSED TO WORK WITH YOU--?!
YOU WOULD'VE WANTED ME SOONER OR LATER
THIS WAY, WE GET THE SEX OUT OF THE WAY STRAIGHT OFF, AND SETTLE INTO A NICE, PURELY PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIP
NOW GET DRESSED. PILCHARD'S EXPECTING US IN AN HOUR
Oh, AND WEAR THAT CUTE LITTLE LEATHER NUMBER I PICKED OUT FROM YOUR CLOSET

I'LL FILE A GRIEVANCE WITH PILCHARD
YOU WANT TO COMMIT CAREER SUICIDE, BE MY GUEST
I WOULD REMIND YOU, HOWEVER, THAT AS FAR AS ANYONE IN THE FIRM KNOWS, YOU SUCCESSFULLY MADE CONTACT WITH ME LAST NIGHT
~AND WE'RE OFF TO A GRAND START, SAVING THE WORLD EVERY OTHER WEEK
AN OFFICIAL COMPLAINT WILL ONLY GET YOU SENT BACK TO WHATEVER MI6 POST THE OLD MAN PLUCKED YOU FROM
WHY NOT STICK AROUND INSTEAD AND SEE THE INFAMOUS CHARLES BASILDON IN ACTION?
"THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS," LJV
DROP DEAD

GOING DOWN?
NEVER AGAIN
ALL RIGHT, YOU CREEP I *WON'T* BLOW THE WHISTLE BUT YOU ARE *FAR* FROM OFF THE HOOK !
WE'LL DO OUR DUTY FOR "OLD BLIGHTY" YOU WILL *NEVER* MENTION THIS AGAIN
AND ONE DAY, WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT, *YOU'RE* GONNA FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO GET SC
GOOD MORNING, POUNDSTONE
CHIEF'S *EXPECTING* YOU
HULLO, BASIL DON MAY I ASSUME FROM HER *SCOWL* THAT AGENT SHELLEY HAS ALREADY SET ABOUT PUTTING YOU IN YOUR PLACE?
YES, SHE GAVE ME QUITE THE *TONGUE-LASHING* LAST NIGHT
JOLLY GOOD, BECAUSE YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT TOGETHER IS GOING TO BE DEADLY *SERIOUS* STUFF, I'M AFRAID

" IT CONCERNS A RATHER ENIGMATIC ENTREPRENEUR OF UNCERTAIN ORIGIN HIS NAME IS LAZARUS BALE "
<WHAT IS IT GIRLS? WHAT DO YOU SMELL?>
<SHOW ME THE IDIOT WHO WANTS TO ESCAPE!>
YELP! YELP! WHIINnneee...
<GIRLS ?>

WHO ARE YOU?!
HALT, OR I'LL SHOOT!
NI KHUYA !
YOU YOU LOOK LIKE
COMRADE STALIN?!
YOU ARE RELIEVED OF DUTY
AIEEEEE!!
WHAT THE -?

A THOUSAND PARDONS, GENTLEMEN
KYAAA!!
PRONTO, ADOLPH! YOU TAKE A TOO LONG WITH THAT LOCK !
=HK-K-SPUT KK=
THE VERDAMMT THING IS FROZEN UND MINE BLADE IS TOO WIDE
STEP ASIDE
YOU NEVER RUN OUT OF EXCUSES, DO YOU, ADOLPH?

AAHH! <DON'T HURT ME!>
<WAIT A MINUTE>
Ah, MEIN GOTT--! HE MADE YOU DIDN'T HE ?
AND SUCH BEAUTIFUL WORK TOO
THOUGH WHY INCLUDE THE BOLSHEVIK SCHVEINE?
KOBA IS THE PUNCHLINE TO THE JOKE, HERR DOKTOR THE GREATEST VILLAINS YOU DEGENERATES EVER PRODUCED--ALL ANSWERING TO ME
I'M BEGINNING TO WISH I HAD CLONED MAO, AS WELL
BALE.
IT IS YOU
I TOLD THEM NOTHING, YOU KNOW
AND YOU NEVER WILL

WELL?
I KNEW WE'D GET A COLD RECEPTION, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS
SOMEONE BEAT US TO THE PUNCH?
OOOHHHUNNHHH
UURNNNHHGUHHH
YAHHH!!! BUMMM!! BUMMM!!!
OH, MY GOD--!

GOOD LORD, THEY CUT OFF HIS TONGUE, AS WELL AS HIS HANDS!
WHATEVER IT IS HE KNOWS, NOW HE CAN'T SAY IT OR WRITE IT DOWN
LOOKS LIKE HE HAS BODILY INJURIES, TOO
LET ME GET A LOOK
BUMMM!! BUMMMM!!
WHAT'S HE TRYING TO SAY?
I DON'T KNOW SOUNDS LIKE--
--"BOMB."

WELL, THAT TIES UP MY LAST LOOSE END
ANYONE ELSE HUNGRY ?
JA, CHUST NOT ANOTHER PIZZA
UPPA YOURS, SCHNITZEL-BRAIN!
SETTLE DOWN, BOYS THE RIDE HOME WILL BE LONG ENOUGH, AS IT IS.

KISS KISS BANG BANG™

CrossGen
#2 MAR 2004

BEDARD
PERKINS
HENNESSY
VILLARI

TOP SECRET

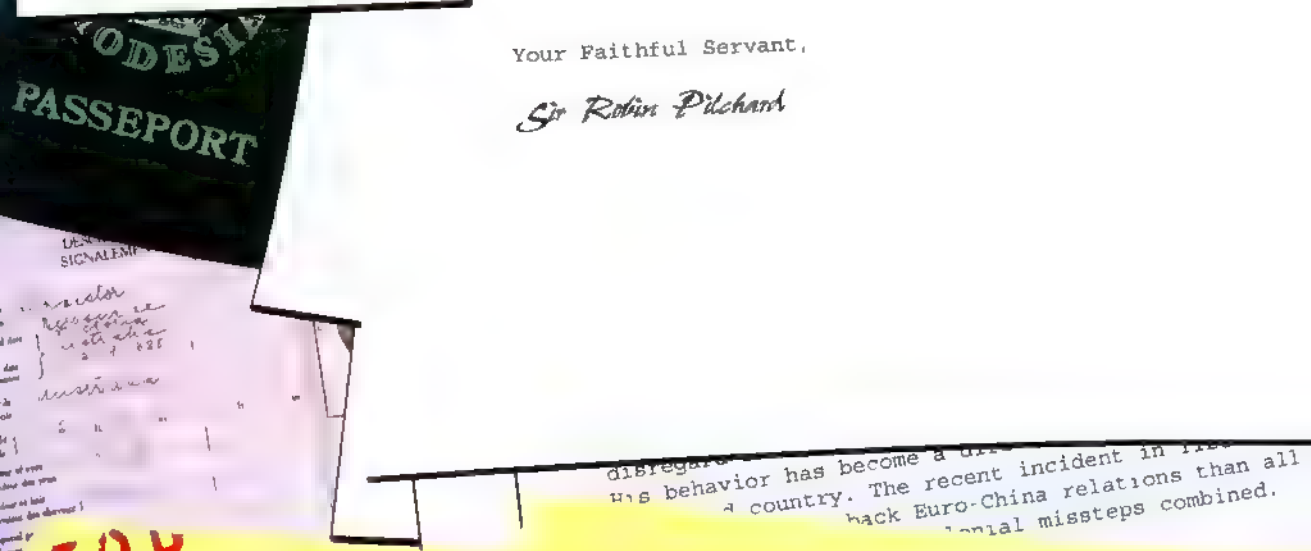
25th October, 1965
TO: Prime Minister Harold Wilson
FROM: Sir Robin Pilchard, Director MI6
RE: Agents Basildon & Shelley

Our top agent, **Charles Basildon**, has been officially paired up with his new understudy, Field Agent **Stephanie Shelley**. The two are currently on assignment in Siberia. We have intelligence suggesting that one of the inmates in Gulag Camp #147 is a former associate of **Lazarus Bale**, and may even have information on Bale's mysterious background. This inmate was a student of Dr. Josef Mengele, further supporting rumours that Bale once served the Third Reich.

Basildon and Shelley appear to be working well together, though, as you might expect, there is some friction between them, owing to Basildon's rather boorish behaviour. I have every confidence that Agent Shelley will keep the cad in check. I only wish I had as much confidence in their safety behind the Iron Curtain.

Your Faithful Servant,

Sir Robin Pilchard



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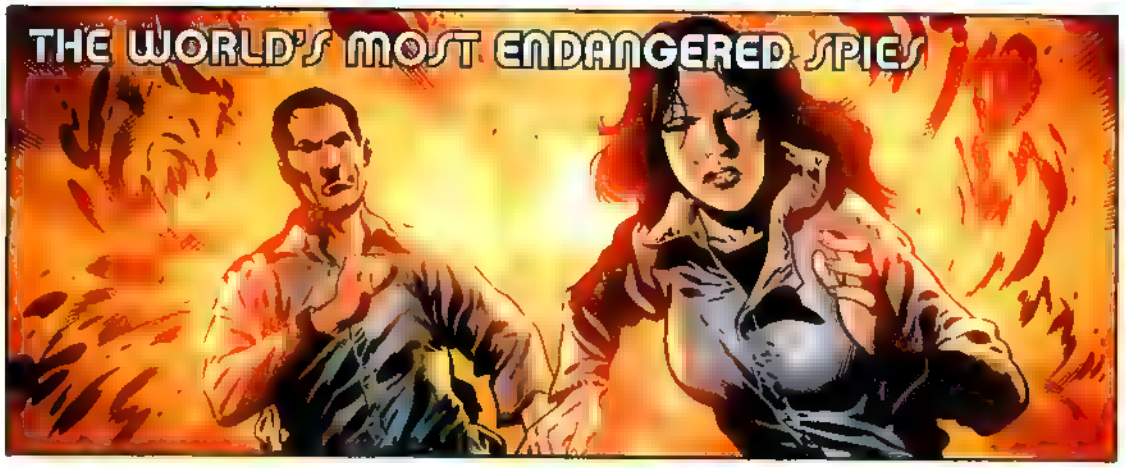
BUMMM
Siberia
U.S.S.R.
1965
GOOD GOD, THEY'VE RIGGED HIM TO EXPLODE!
GIVE ME THE WIRECUTTERS! WE CAN STILL SAVE HIM!
WHU ?!
BUGGER HIM YOU CAN STILL SAVE ME!

SONOVA !
OH YOU BLEEDIN' PAIN IN THE
-ARSE-!
-OOF-
-WHUNG-

Oh, NO—!
"Oh, NO" WHAT?
CAN'T YOU READ RUSSIAN?!
THESE PIPES CARRY THE CAMP'S FUEL OIL!
BRILLIANT, AGENT SHELLEY
"HOW MUCH WORSE CAN YOU BOLLIX THIS MISSION?!"
TIKATIKATIKATIKAKLIK

CrossGen
Comics
presents:

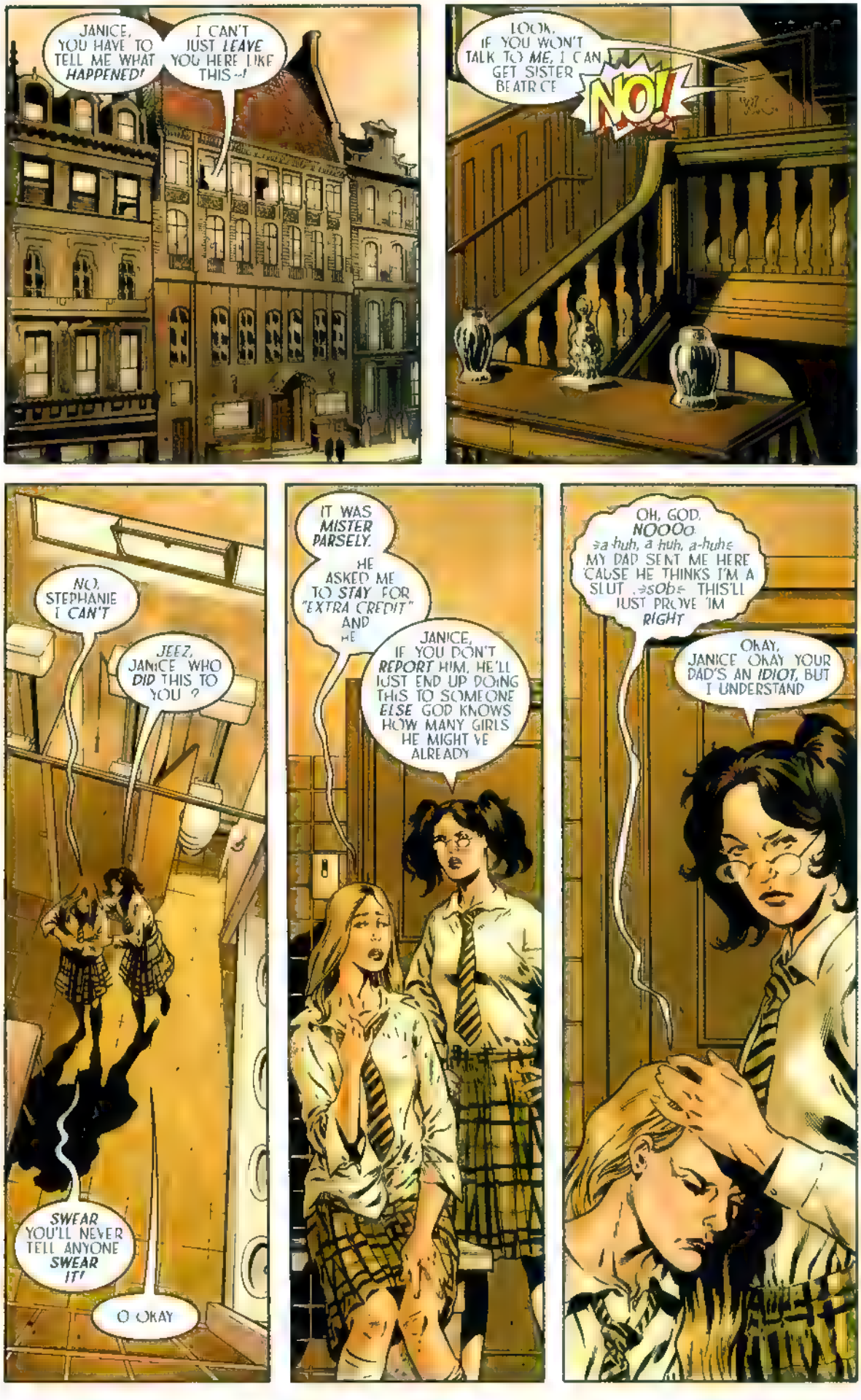

THE WORLD'S MOST ENDANGERED SPIES

SIR CHARLES BASILDON
& STEPHANIE SHELLEY

AGENTS OF MI6
HEY--!
FIGHTING EVIL
...AND EACH OTHER, IN:

KISS KISS
BANG BANG
words
TONY
BEDARD
pictures
MIKE
PERKINS
inks
ANDREW
HENNESSY
colors
LAURA
VILLARI
letters
DAVE
LANPHEAR

WELL, THAT TIES UP MY LAST LOOSE END ANYONE ELSE HUNGRY ?
I'M-A CURIOUS, PAPA WHO WAS HE?
THE OLD MAN? HE WAS THE LAST SURVIVOR OF THE EXPEDITION THAT FOUND ME BACK IN 43
POOR, PEDANTIC DOCTOR TANNHAUSER
HE SAVED ME FROM A LIVING DEATH, ONLY TO STICK ME WITH SUCH A LURID NAME I MEAN REALLY, "LAZARUS BALE" ?
UND ZE MAN UND VOMAN?
THEY WERE BRITISH INTELLIGENCE
" BIT OF AN OXYMORON, WOULDN'T YOU SAY ?"

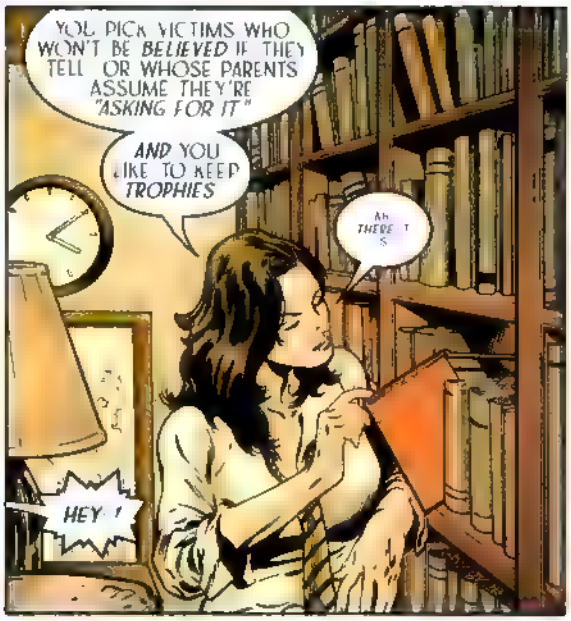

JANICE, YOU HAVE TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED!
I CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOU HERE LIKE THIS--!
LOOK, IF YOU WON'T TALK TO ME, I CAN GET SISTER BEATRICE
NO!
NO, STEPHANIE I CAN'T
JEEZ, JANICE WHO DID THIS TO YOU ?
SWEAR YOU'LL NEVER TELL ANYONE SWEAR IT!
O OKAY
IT WAS MISTER PARSELY.
HE ASKED ME TO STAY FOR "EXTRA CREDIT" AND HE
JANICE, IF YOU DON'T REPORT HIM, HE'LL JUST END UP DOING THIS TO SOMEONE ELSE GOD KNOWS HOW MANY GIRLS HE MIGHT'VE ALREADY
OH, GOD. NOOOo. a-huh, a-huh, a-huh MY DAD SENT ME HERE 'CAUSE HE THINKS I'M A SLUT .sOb THIS'LL JUST PROVE 'IM RIGHT
OKAY, JANICE OKAY YOUR DAD'S AN IDIOT, BUT I UNDERSTAND

" GIVE ME SOME TIME, AND I THINK I CAN COME UP W TH A BETTER WAY TO HANDLE MISTER PARSELY, ANYWAY "
STEPHANIE SHELLEY ?
PHOTOGRA PROJECT DUE NEXT MONDAY
MARCH APRIL
JULY AUGUST
MISTER PARSELY? CAN WE TALK? I, uh I HAVE A LITTLE PROBLEM
THE KIND OF PROBLEM THAT REQUIRES WELL A MAN'S POINT OF VIEW
Er CERTAINLY, MISS SHELLEY
DOES ANYONE KNOW YOU RE HERE?
2a
NO THIS S TOO PERSONAL
I T IS?
SEE, MY FOLKS ARE ENGLISH PRIM AND PROPER, KINDA OLD-FASHIONED, AND
WELL, MY DAD KEEPS SAY NG I'M ONLY INTERESTED IN ONE THING

AND IT'S NOT SCHOOL
SO I NEED YOU TO TELL ME, MISTER PARSELY DO YOU THINK DADDY'S RIGHT ABOUT ME?
AH, NO NO, I NEVER REALLY GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU WERE PREOCCUPIED WITH BOYS
RIGHT YOU ARE! I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT BOYS.
MEN, ON THE OTHER HAND
NOW, LOOK HERE, STEPHANIE, THE SISTERS HIRED ME TO TEACH ART CLASS~
~NOT TO ADVISE FIFTEEN YEAR OLD GIRLS ON THEIR BURGEONING BLOSSOMING SEX LIVES
BUT
BUT NOTHING
THIS IS NOT A SUITABLE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION INSIDE THIS SCHOOL
WHICH IS WHY YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY ME A VISIT AT HOME

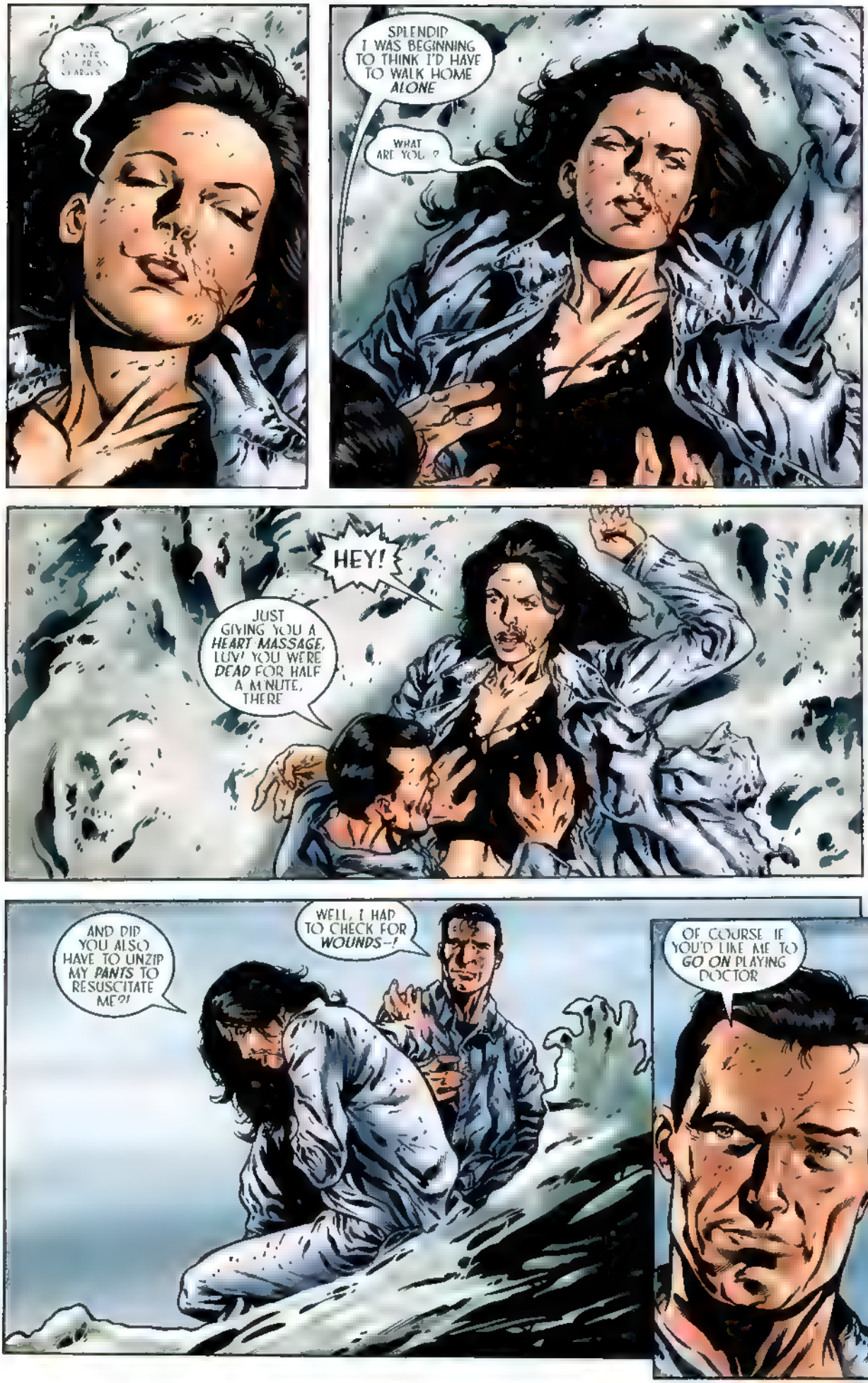
Y'KNOW I REALLY WANT TO *THANK* YOU FOR INVITING ME HERE
YOU MIGHT NOT FEEL SO GRATEFUL BY THE TIME YOU *LEAVE*
I SEE YOU LIKE *BOOKS*. I'M A READER TOO.

IN FACT AFTER JANICE TOLD ME WHAT YOU'D *DONE* TO HER I DID *A LOT* OF READING ABOUT PERV WELL PEOPLE LIKE *YOU*
TURNS OUT YOUR PATHOLOGY IS AWFULLY *PREDICTABLE*


YOU PICK VICTIMS WHO WON'T BE *BELIEVED* IF THEY TELL OR WHOSE PARENTS ASSUME THEY'RE *"ASKING FOR IT"*
AND YOU LIKE TO KEEP *TROPHIES*
AH *THERE IT IS*
HEY!

FIGURED THERE'D BE A HIDDEN *STASH* SOMEWHERE BUT THE TRICK BOOKCASE? KINDA CLICHÉ, DON'T YOU THINK?
YOU LITTLE *SNAKE!*
I TOLD YOU THAT RUBBISH ABOUT MY DAD THINKING I'M *BOY CRAZY* SO I'D FIT YOUR VICTIM PROFILE

AND I ASKED JANICE TO CALL THE POLICE AT FOUR O'CLOCK SHARP AND REPORT A RAPE IN PROGRESS!
I'LL KILL YOU!
HUP
-NFF-
--KYAIIII!
-UNGH-
DID I MENTION I ALSO READ A BOOK ABOUT JUDO?

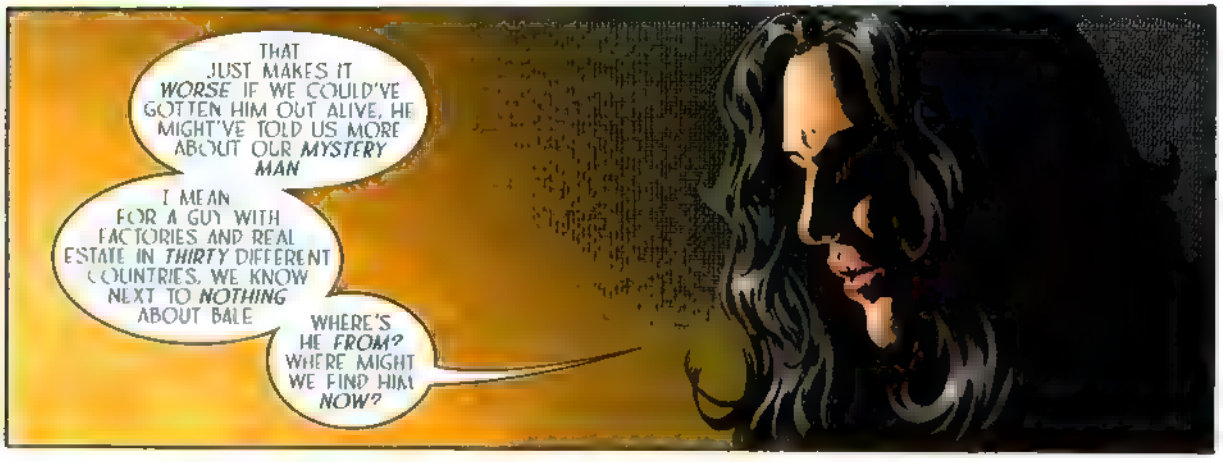

SPLENDID! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK I'D HAVE TO WALK HOME *ALONE*
WHAT ARE YOU ?
HEY!
JUST GIVING YOU A *HEART MASSAGE*, LUV! YOU WERE *DEAD* FOR HALF A MINUTE, THERE
AND DID YOU ALSO HAVE TO UNZIP MY *PANTS* TO RESUSCITATE ME?!
WELL, I HAD TO CHECK FOR *WOUNDS*--!
OF COURSE IF YOU'D LIKE ME TO *GO ON* PLAYING DOCTOR

GOD IN HEAVEN, BASILDON, WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU ?
WE'RE SITTING ON A MASS GRAVE AND YOU ACT LIKE IT'S A SINGLES BAR!
YES PERMAFROST MUST'VE KEPT THEM FROM DIGGING FRESH GRAVES ONCE WINTER SET IN PROBABLY BEEN PILING UP FOR WEEKS
SO IF ANYTHING STIFF POKED YOU WHILST YOU LAY THERE IT WASN'T ME AT ALL!
IF YOU DON'T STOP, I SWEAR I'LL PUKE
LET'S JUST GET BACK TO THE EXFIL POINT BEFORE WE MISS OUR RIDE OUT OF SIBERIA
WHAT WAS THAT YOU WERE MUMBLING BACK THERE? SOMETHING ABOUT "PRESSING CHARGES"?
Huh?
Oh
JUST A MEMORY SOMETHING I DID BACK AT St MARY'S SCHOOL FOR GIRLS PUT A RAPIST BEHIND BARS
GOT MYSELF NOTICED BY SOMEONE WHO WORKED WITH MY MUM AND DAD AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY MI6 RECRUITED ME A MONTH LATER
AND TRAINED YOU TO SPY ON THE YANKS SINCE YOU FIT IN SO WELL ACROSS THE POND YES I'VE READ YOUR DOSSIER

Carnaby Street
London
(M16 SECRET COMMAND POST)
"AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN SEE *WHO* BOOBY TRAPPED THE OLD JERRY?"

AFRAID NOT CHIEF -THOUGH I'D BET MY LAST QUID YOUR MAN *LAZARUS BALE* GOT HIS PEOPLE THERE *FIRST*
THEIR TIMING SUGGESTS THEY KNEW WE WERE COMING MAKES ONE WONDER IF WE HAVE A *MOLE* SOMEWHERE IN THE FIRM
I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW *SORRY* I AM THAT OUR MISSION *FAILED*

NOT A *COMPLETE* FAILURE, STEPHANIE DEAR. THE WHOLE *POINT* WAS TO VERIFY THE PRISONER'S RUMOURED *LINK* TO BALE
IF BASILDON'S CORRECT, AT LEAST YOU'VE *CONFIRMED* THAT CONNECTION

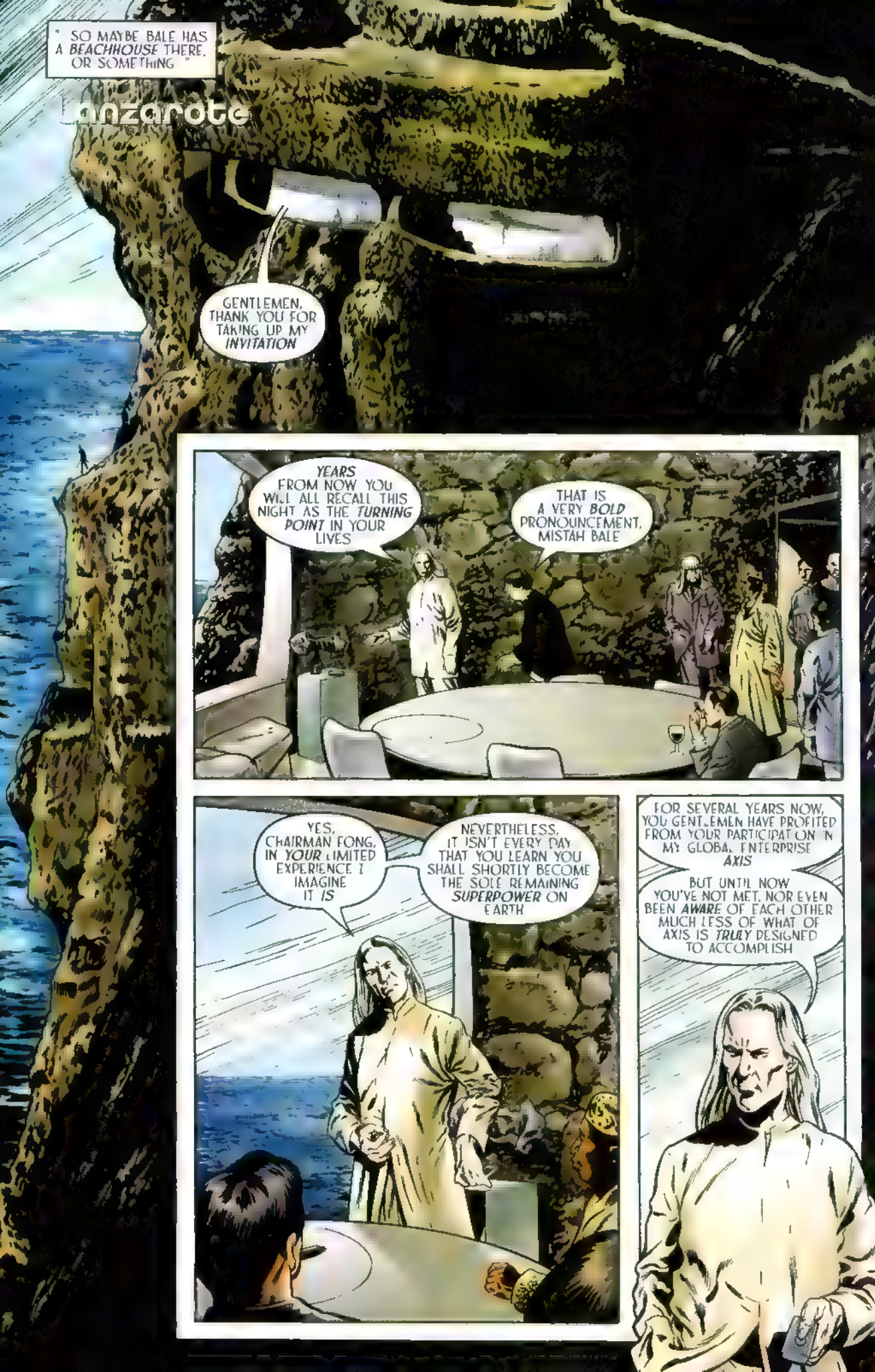

THAT JUST MAKES IT *WORSE* IF WE COULD'VE GOTTEN HIM OUT ALIVE, HE MIGHT'VE TOLD US MORE ABOUT OUR *MYSTERY MAN*
I MEAN FOR A GUY WITH FACTORIES AND REAL ESTATE IN *THIRTY* DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, WE KNOW NEXT TO *NOTHING* ABOUT BALE
WHERE'S HE *FROM*? WHERE MIGHT WE FIND HIM *NOW*?

FOR THAT MATTER, WHY DOES MI6 RATE THIS BLOKE THREAT LEVEL ALPHA?
PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TELL US EVERYTHING YOU HAVE ON HIM, PILCHARD
YOU SAID IT WAS CLASSIFIED "NEED TO KNOW" AT THE MISSION BRIEFING BUT THAT LACK OF INFORMATION NEARLY GOT US KILLED
SORRY ABOUT THAT, OLD CHAP BUT YOU SAID IT YOURSELF THERE COULD BE A MOLE AMONGST US, SO WE KEEP THE BALE FILE UNDER WRAPS NOT THAT THERE'S MUCH IN THE FILE
NO BIRTH CERTIFICATE, NOR EVEN DOCUMENTS OF CITIZENSHIP BEYOND SOME PAPERS FORGED BY THE NAZIS
AND HIS INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS ARE ALL OFFICIALLY REGISTERED TO PROXIES, NONE WILLING TO BREATHE A WORD ABOUT THE MAN THEY SERVE
IT'S AS IF BALE DOESN'T EXIST, AND YET HE CONTROLS BILLIONS OF POUNDS INTERNATIONALLY--THAT WE KNOW OF
MAYBE HE DOESN'T EXIST MAYBE HE'S MADE UP, THE SAME WAY "CHARLES BASILDON" DOESN'T REALLY EXIST
I'M REAL ENOUGH
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN
WELL, WHETHER OR NOT "LAZARUS BALE" IS AN ALIAS HE DOES EXIST THE MAN IS RATHER STRIKING, BEING THAT HE'S AN ALBINO
THEN YOU HAVE PICTURES?
ER YES AND NO

SOMEHOW, REGARDLESS OF HOW DISTANT THE CAMERA, THE CHAP SEEMS TO *SENSE* WHEN HE'S BEING PHOTOGRAPHED, AND MOVES HIS HEAD TO AVOID A CLEAR PORTRAIT
THIS ONE WAS SHOT WITH A HIDDEN CAMERA IN CARACAS
WE'VE STOPPED TRYING *ALL* OF THE MEN WHO TOOK THESE SNAPSHOTS LATER *DIED* UNDER MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.
IN FACT, *EVERY* MAN WE ASSIGNED TO THE BALE INVESTIGATION HAS MET WITH AN UNTIMELY END DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS
MIGHT'VE BEEN NICE TO TELL US *THAT* BEFORE WE NIPPED OFF TO SIBERIA IF WE'RE OUT OF HARD FACTS, WHAT ABOUT *RUMORS?*
THERE'S BEEN MENTION OF A GROUP THAT CALLS ITSELF *AXIS* APPARENTLY A CRIMINAL CARTEL WITH AN INTEREST IN *GERM WARFARE*
OLD NAZIS "AXIS"
WHY NOT SEARCH FOR HIM IN A BERLIN BUNKER?
WHY NOT SEARCH FOR HIM AT *WORK?* WE *DO* KNOW WHERE HIS CORPORATE OFFICES ARE, RIGHT?
THE CHIEF SAID NO ONE'S TALKING
THEN WE FOLLOW THE *MONEY* MAYBE THERE'S SOME *CLUE* IN THE ACCOUNTING LOGS, OR PAYROLL FILES ?
SHE DOES HAVE A BIT OF A *SPARK* TO HER, eh, BASILDON?
YES, BUT HER TASTE IN MEN IS SIMPLY *DREADFUL*

Transition Pharmaceuticals
Corporate Headquarters
Buenos Aires, Argentina
SORRY "SPARKY" BUT THERE ARE NO BALES OR LAZBUSES ON THE PAYROLL
I FOUND A FLOORPLAN THE BIGGEST OFFICE IS MARKED "EXECUTIVE SUITE L B"
PROBABLY STANDS FOR "LOVELY BATHROOM"
O KAY

I'VE HEARD OF MINIMALIST DECOR BUT THIS IS BLEEDIN' RIDICULOUS!
DRAWERS ARE EMPTY DOESN'T APPEAR AS THOUGH ANYONE ACTUALLY WORKS HERE
YOU ARE GOING TO HELP?
I AM HELPING
THIS ISN'T A CARTOON FROM PLAYBOY MAGAZINE SO YOU'RE PROBABLY UNFAMILIAR WITH THE WORK BUT I RECOGNIZE THE ARTIST
HIS NAME IS CESAR MANRIQUE
AND YOU THINK THIS RATHER QUESTIONABLE ARTIST IS OUR MAN BAKER?
NO MANRIQUE'S DEFINITELY NOT A BIMBO BUT HE IS THE FAVORITE SON OF A VOLCANIC ISLE A.K.A. LANZAROTE IT'S ONE OF THE CANARY ISLANDS


" SO MAYBE BALE HAS A BEACHHOUSE THERE, OR SOMETHING "
Lanzarote
GENTLEMEN, THANK YOU FOR TAKING UP MY INVITATION
YEARS FROM NOW YOU WILL ALL RECALL THIS NIGHT AS THE TURNING POINT IN YOUR LIVES
THAT IS A VERY BOLD PRONOUNCEMENT, MISTAH BALE
YES, CHAIRMAN FONG, IN YOUR LIMITED EXPERIENCE I IMAGINE IT IS
NEVERTHELESS, IT ISN'T EVERY DAY THAT YOU LEARN YOU SHALL SHORTLY BECOME THE SOLE REMAINING SUPERPOWER ON EARTH
FOR SEVERAL YEARS NOW, YOU GENTLEMEN HAVE PROFITED FROM YOUR PARTICIPATION IN MY GLOBAL ENTERPRISE AXIS
BUT UNTIL NOW YOU'VE NOT MET, NOR EVEN BEEN AWARE OF EACH OTHER MUCH LESS OF WHAT OF AXIS IS TRULY DESIGNED TO ACCOMPLISH

GENERAL MBUKU PRESIDENTE CASTRILLO DON BARGUTTI CHAIRMAN FONG SHEIK al DOURI
YOU WILL PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER THAT I OFFER YOU TONIGHT
WHAT'S WITH THE DOLLHOUSE, BALE?
THIS, DON BARGUTTI IS A SCALE REPLICA OF MY PLACE OF BIRTH
A PLACE THAT NOW LIES FAR FROM THE PRYING EYES OF YOUR GOVERNMENTS A PLACE KNOWN ONLY TO ME
THIS, GENTLEMEN IS THE LOST CITY STATE OF ATLANTIS
WHAT'S HE SAYING?
HE'S NUTS
IF THIS IS A JOKE, MISTER BALE, I AM NOT LAUGHING
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, MAFIOSO, BUT I AM IN TOO DEEP WITH THIS HOMBRE TO SUDDENLY FIND OUT HE IS COMPLETELY LOCO
DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS PRESIDENTE SURE BALE'S A LITTLE SPOOKY HELL, ONE LOOK AT HIS BOYS TELLS YOU HE'S GOT A SCREW LOOSE
BUT HE'S MADE ME ENOUGH COLD HARD CASH OVER THE YEARS THAT WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL CRAZY, I SEE MERELY AS ECCENTRIC

WELL *SAID*, BARGUTTI. NOW ALL OF YOU PAY ATTENTION
THREE HUNDRED AND TWENTY KILOMETERS *WEST* OF HERE, THIS TOWER STILL STANDS, THOUGH IT IS NOW FIVE HUNDRED FEET *BELOW* THE SURFACE
WITHIN IT IS A REPOSITORY OF ANCIENT *DISEASES* AND BIOLOGICAL AGENTS THAT *NO* CURRENT SCIENTIST IS EQUIPPED TO COMBAT
EXCEPT FOR TRANSITION PHARMACEUTICAL
THE PANDEMIC IS COMING, GENTLEMEN, AND ONLY *WE* MAKE THE *CURE*
EITHER HE'S LAYING OUT THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS *SCAM* ON THESE GUYS, OR HE HAS SOMETHING *HUGE* UP HIS SLEEVE
MY *HANDS* ARE CRAMPING SHELLEY. I'M GOING UP FOR A *SMOKE*
=UHHH=

AHH!
HEY!
LET GO UNFE- DOZY COW!
JUST HANG ON TEN SECONDS LONGER! I'LL CLIMB OVER YOU AND
I CAN'T-!
ALLOW ME
WHO IS THAT? WHO'S UP THERE?!
WELL, IT BLOODY WELL ISN'T THE BEATLES

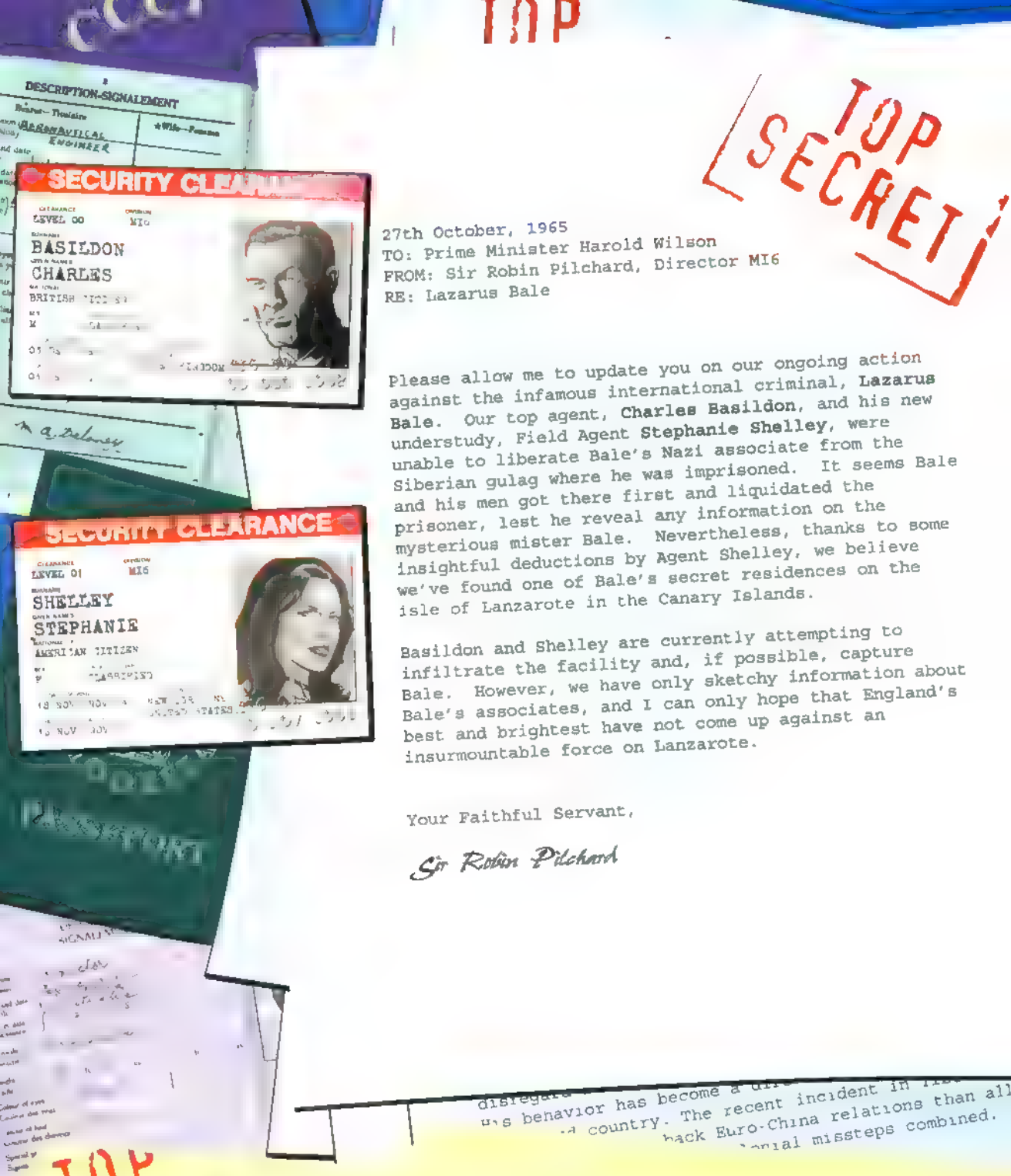
Lady Death: THE WILD HUNT PREVIEW INSIDE!

KISS KISS BANG BANG™

"SUBVERSIVE... TWISTED... I HEARTILY APPROVE!"
–Ain't It Cool News

BEDARD
PERKINS
HENNESSY
VILLARI

CrossGen
#3 APRIL 2004



27th October, 1965
TO: Prime Minister Harold Wilson
FROM: Sir Robin Pilchard, Director MI6
RE: Lazarus Bale

Please allow me to update you on our ongoing action against the infamous international criminal, **Lazarus Bale**. Our top agent, **Charles Basildon**, and his new understudy, Field Agent **Stephanie Shelley**, were unable to liberate Bale's Nazi associate from the Siberian gulag where he was imprisoned. It seems Bale and his men got there first and liquidated the prisoner, lest he reveal any information on the mysterious mister Bale. Nevertheless, thanks to some insightful deductions by Agent Shelley, we believe we've found one of Bale's secret residences on the isle of Lanzarote in the Canary Islands.

Basildon and Shelley are currently attempting to infiltrate the facility and, if possible, capture Bale. However, we have only sketchy information about Bale's associates, and I can only hope that England's best and brightest have not come up against an insurmountable force on Lanzarote.

Your Faithful Servant,

Sir Robin Pilchard

disregard
his behavior has become a dir
country. The recent incident in
back Euro-China relations than all
social missteps combined.

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The Atlantic Floor
1943
"I WAS NOT FOUND BY ACCIDENT. THE MEN WHO AWOKE ME *KNEW* WHAT THEY WERE DOING
"IT WAS THEIR TASK TO SATISFY THEIR *MASTER'S* APPETITE FOR THE *OCCULT* AND THE ARCANE."
<TWENTY METERS OFF THE STARBOARD BOW, MEN GRAB THE FIRST ONE YOU ENCOUNTER AND BRING IT IN>
<TWENTY METERS OFF THE STARBOARD BOW, MEN GRAB THE FIRST ONE YOU ENCOUNTER AND BRING IT IN>

<STAY IN THE LIGHT~ TAKE NO UNNECESSARY RISKS >
JA, JA, HERR DOKTOR
<WE ARE NOT CHILDREN, YOU KNOW
<GRAB THE OTHER END, HEINRICH >
JAWOHL
<HE LOOKS FRESH! HOW LONG HAVE THESE THINGS BEEN DOWN HERE?>
<LONG ENOUGH TO GROW BARNACLES ->
<ENOUGH CHATTER, GENTLEMEN CONCENTRATE ON NOT DROPPING OUR GUEST >

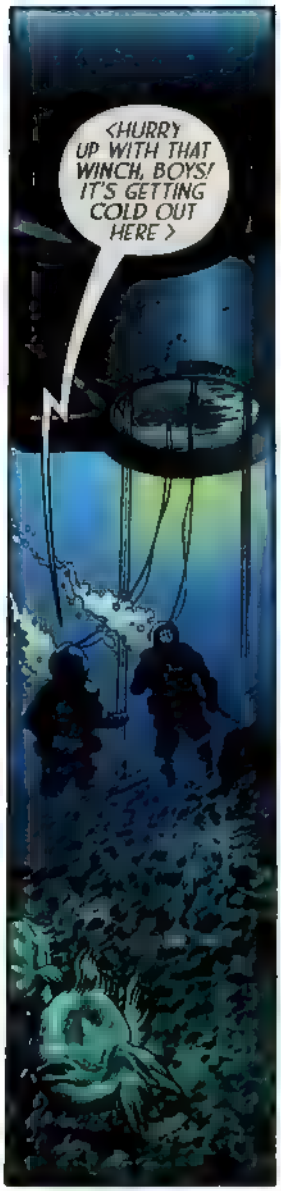
<AT EASE, TANNHAUSER MY MEN ARE THE BEST THEY WILL NOT DAMAGE YOUR PRIZE>
<FORGIVE ME, KAPITAN, BUT THE FUEHRER HIMSELF AWAITS WORD OF OUR SUCCESS. I'VE NO DESIRE TO DISAPPOINT HIM.>
<GENTLY GENTLY MY LIFE'S WORK IS IN YOUR HANDS>
<I WAS ON THE U-BOAT THAT FIRST LOCATED THESE RUINS, BACK IN 'THIRTY-SIX >
<...I'VE DREAMT OF THIS MOMENT EVER SINCE >
SS

"IN FACT, DOCTOR TANNHAUSER AND HIS TEAM OF EXPERTS HAD SPENT EIGHT YEARS STUDYING MURKY PHOTOGRAPHS OF OUR *WRITING*, PAINSTAKINGLY DECIPHERING OUR *ALPHABET*
". HE KNEW FAR *MORE* ABOUT MY CULTURE THAN HE EVER LET ON TO THE *REST* OF THE CREW"
<IS THAT ELECTRONICS ?>
<YOU SAID THIS THING WAS ANCIENT >
<GOOD GOOD EXCELENT CONDITION >
"THE GOOD DOCTOR HAD BEEN *WELL TRAINED*"

DOKTOR~!

<YOU CAN'T FIRE THAT THING DOWN HERE! WE'RE RIGHT AT CRUSHING DEPTH!>
!
" HIS INSTRUCTIONS WERE SPECIFIC

"...ONCE I WAS SAFELY RECOVERED, THERE MUST BE NO WITNESSES"


<HURRY UP WITH THAT WINCH, BOYS! IT'S GETTING COLD OUT HERE >

"THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO WOULD LEAVE THAT VESSEL ALIVE WERE THE DOCTOR, HIS CONFEDERATE IN THE ENGINE ROOM AND MYSELF"
CrossGen Comics presents

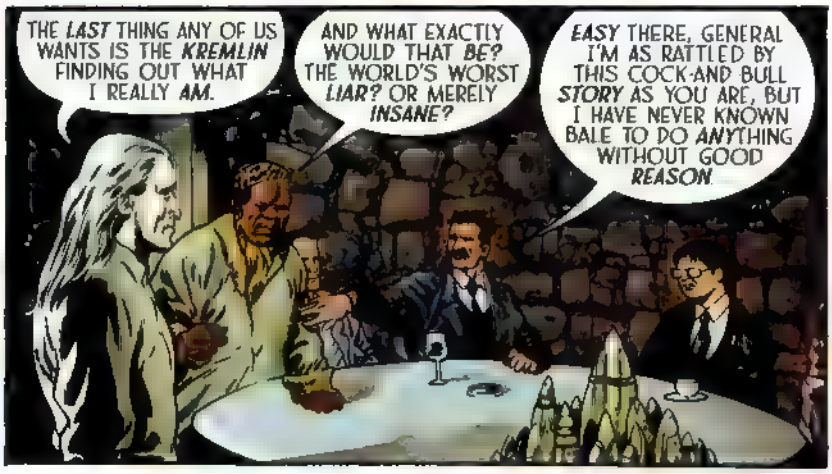
THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS CRIMINAL
LAZARUS BALE, IN...

scans
RESIN-
DCP

words	pictures	inks	colors	letters
TONY BEDARD	MIKE PERKINS	ANDREW HENNESSY	LAURA VILLARI	DAVE LANPHEAR

Lanzarote
Canary Islands
1965
IT TOOK DOCTOR TANNHAUSER A YEAR TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO END MY *STASIS* WITHOUT KILLING ME

A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT, GIVEN THE SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT OF THE DAY I SHALL ALWAYS BE *GRATEFUL* TO HIM.
REGRETFULLY, I WAS RECENTLY FORCED TO *DESTROY* HIM, BUT ONCE HE TURNED UP IN A SOVIET *GULAG*, I HAD TO ENSURE HIS SILENCE


THE *LAST* THING ANY OF US WANTS IS THE *KREMLIN* FINDING OUT WHAT I REALLY *AM*.
AND WHAT EXACTLY WOULD THAT *BE*? THE WORLD'S WORST *LIAR*? OR MERELY *INSANE*?
EASY THERE, GENERAL I'M AS RATTLED BY THIS COCK-AND BULL *STORY* AS YOU ARE, BUT I HAVE NEVER KNOWN BALE TO DO *ANY*THING WITHOUT GOOD *REASON*

FIFTEEN YEARS, WE DONE BUSINESS. YOU NEVER TOLD ME A *THING* ABOUT YOUR PAST, AND I NEVER *ASKED*. I JUST COUNTED THE MONEY AND *SMILED*.
SO WHY THROW IT ALL AWAY *NOW*? I MEAN, HOW DO YOU *EXPECT* US TO REACT TO ALL THIS *BUNK* ABOUT NAZI DOCTORS AND "STASIS" GIZMOS. ?

YES, PLEASE *DO* EXPLAIN THIS FICTION IF THIS IS A *TEST*, I AM AFRAID ITS SUBTLETIES ESCAPE ME

HE SAY HE FROM *SHANGRI-LA!* YOU CALL THAT *SUBTLE*?!

NOT SHANGRI-LA
ATLANTIS
AND YOU MAY NO LONGER REMAIN BLISSFULLY IGNORANT OF MY PAST BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO MOUNT A SALVAGE OPERATION

NO
JUST HEAR ME OUT
I HEAR ENOUGH I THINK I SEE ENOUGH, TOO

THIS IS ALL TOO ¿COMO SE DICE? TOO FLASHY FOR ME TO TRUST
THE ALBINO THING, I COULD HANDLE .
BUT THROW IN YOUR LOCO STORY AND THE WAY YOU DRESS UP YOUR BODYGUARDS
OYÉ, WHERE DID YOUR LITTLE HITLERS GO, ANYWAY?

WE HAVE A SECURITY BREACH IN PROGRESS THEY ARE TRAINED TO RESPOND QUIETLY AND EFFECTIVELY

THERE IS SECURITY BREACH?! WHY THERE NO ALARM? WHY YOU NOT SAY SOMETHING?!
BECAUSE WE ARE IN NO DANGER

" WHOEVER HAS COME CALLING, MY YOUNG DICTATORS CAN HANDLE IT"
„MAMA MIA, ADOLPH! YOU TRYING TO GIVE ME THE "WEDGIE" ?
SHUT UP FAT SCHVEINHUND
CAREFUL, GENTLEMEN
I'M SURE YOUR EMPLOYER'S GONE TO GREAT TROUBLE AND EXPENSE TO ARRANGE AN INSIDIOUS DEATHTRAP FOR ME
T'WOULD BE A BLOODY WASTE IF I GO SPLAT UPON THE ROCKS

HOLY--!
AII!
YOU SHOT HIDEKI!
CAREFUL, HOBA! SHOOT ONLY THE GIRL!
I KNOW WHAT I AM DOING!

AGENT SHELLEY, CEASE FIRE! YOU'RE GOING TO GET ME KILLED--!
IF THEY CAPTURE US, WE'RE DEAD ANYWAY!
I SAID STOP!
=UNGH=
@$$HOLE!
=NFF=
YOU SAID THEY HAD IT HANDLED!

Aw, NO SHE'S NOT GONNA

SHE IS--!

HUP!

CHRIST ON A BIKE!

ATTENTO!

NEIN!

NOBODY MOVE!!

FIELD AGENT SHELLEY--MI6! YOU'RE ALL *UNDER ARREST*, BY ORDER OF THE *BRITISH GOVERNMENT!*

LAZARUS BALE, ORDER YOUR MEN TOPSIDE TO SURRENDER TO MY PARTNER! TRY ANYTHING CLEVER, AND I'LL PUT A BULLET IN YOUR BRAIN!
YOU LOOK FAMILIAR, AGENT SHELLEY
SHOULDN'T YOU BE BLOWN TO BITS RIGHT NOW, SOMEWHERE IN SIBERIA ?
SO YOU WERE THERE CALL YOUR MEN NOW, OR YOU'RE DEAD!
SUCH SPIRIT AND RESILIENCE YOU JUST MIGHT PROVE USEFUL
TELL ME, HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT HAND-TO-HAND?
WHAT?

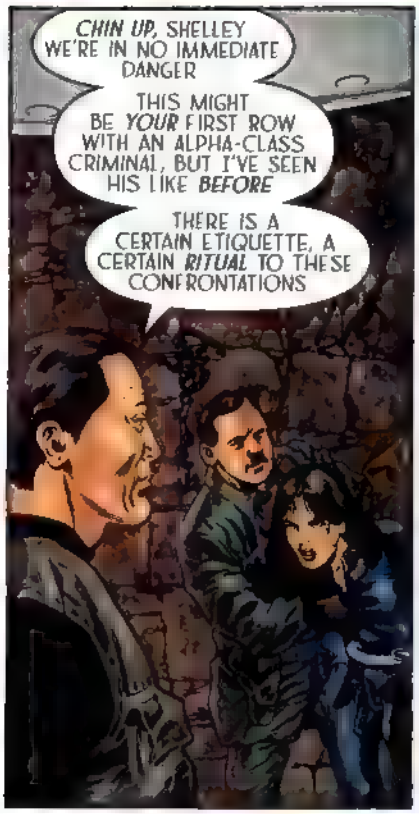
GET AWAY FROM HIM!
OH, MY GOD
YOU REALLY DO LOOK LIKE STALIN!
=NFF= THOUGHT MY EYES WERE PLAYING TRICKS ON ME OUT THERE -
ADOLPH! =WHUNG=
AND YOU. !
VERDAMMT-!
THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR YOU!

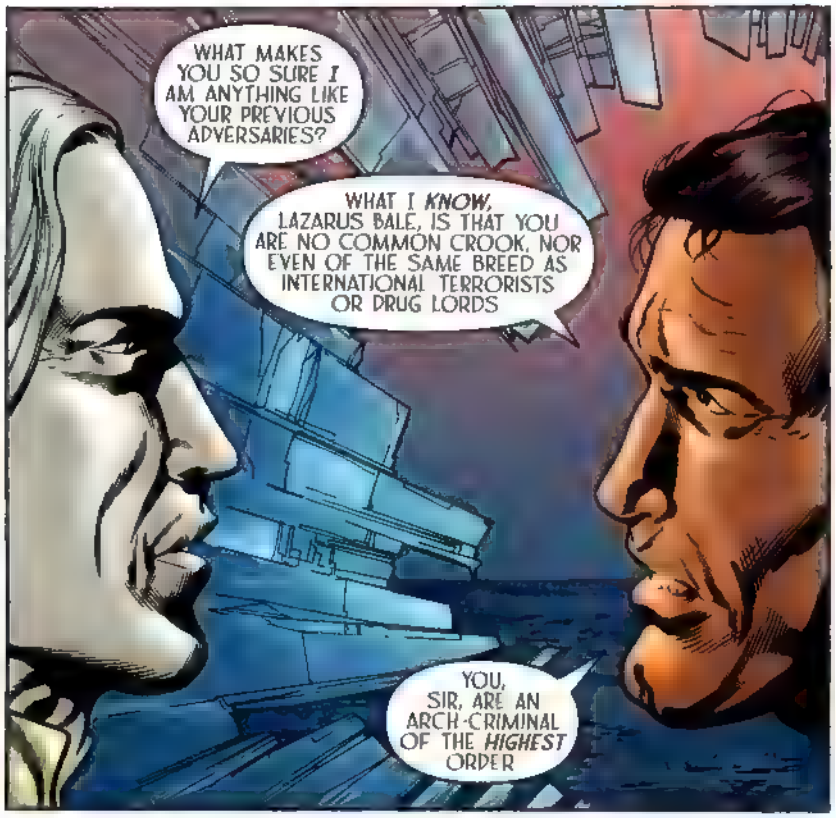
WHAT IS THIS, BALE?!
IS IT A SEX THING?
SEIG~
~HEIL!!!
NO, AGENT SHELLEY IT'S A POWER THING IT'S ALWAYS A POWER THING
akkh hkk
HANDLE HER WITH CARE, BOYS
AGENT SHELLEY IS GOING TO PERFORM A GREAT SERVICE TO AXIS, ONCE I'VE HAD A MOMENT TO PERSUADE HER
=Ahem=

YOU WON'T HAVE MUCH TROUBLE I FOUND HER *QUITE* PERSUADABLE THE FIRST NIGHT I *MET* HER
SHOW THIS ONE A BIT MORE *RESPECT*, BASILDON SHE HAS *BACKBONE*
"BASILDON" ?
AS IN *CHARLES* BASILDON ?
AVE MARIA PURÍSIMA, BALE .. WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN US *INTO* ?

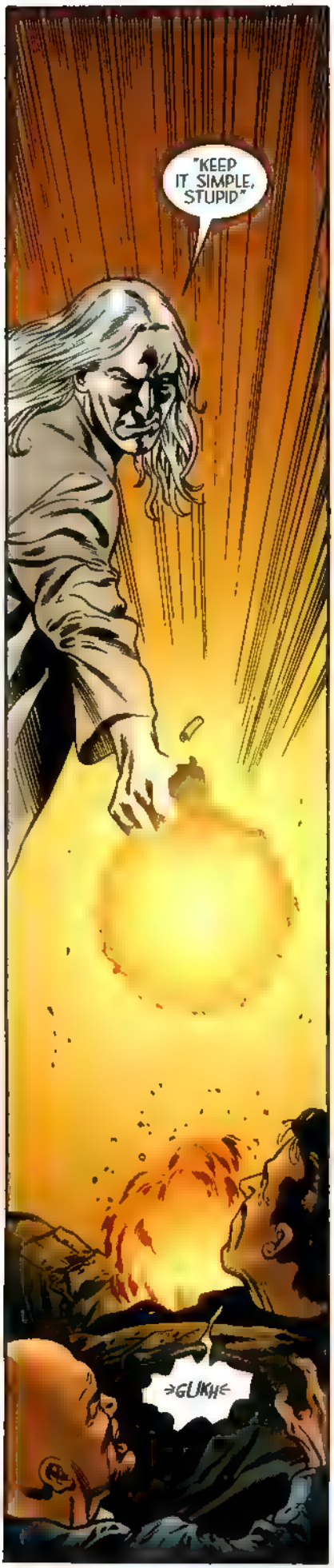
AVANZARE!
>UNH<

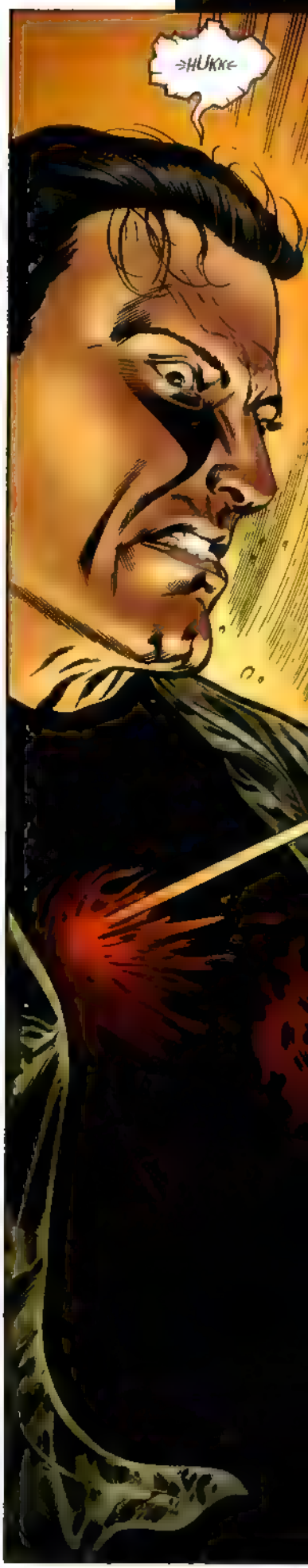
FOR THE "WORLD'S GREATEST SPY," HE'S-A NOT SO TOUGH, PAPA
IS A LITTLE ANTI ANTICLIMACTIC, NO?
I'M IMPRESSED YOU SURVIVED DOCTOR TANNHAUSER'S GOING-AWAY PARTY
QUITE A BLAST-- YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN THERE
YES, WELL, I SHALL HAVE TO BE MORE THOROUGH WITH YOU THIS TIME AROUND, MISTER BASILDON
>unh<


CHIN UP, SHELLEY WE'RE IN NO IMMEDIATE DANGER
THIS MIGHT BE YOUR FIRST ROW WITH AN ALPHA-CLASS CRIMINAL, BUT I'VE SEEN HIS LIKE BEFORE
THERE IS A CERTAIN ETIQUETTE, A CERTAIN RITUAL TO THESE CONFRONTATIONS


WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE I AM ANYTHING LIKE YOUR PREVIOUS ADVERSARIES?
WHAT I KNOW, LAZARUS BALE, IS THAT YOU ARE NO COMMON CROOK, NOR EVEN OF THE SAME BREED AS INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS OR DRUG LORDS
YOU, SIR, ARE AN ARCH-CRIMINAL OF THE HIGHEST ORDER

SIMPLY EXECUTING A WORTHY OPPONENT LIKE MYSELF IS NEVER ENOUGH, BECAUSE I AM THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN FATHOM YOUR DIABOLICAL GENIUS.
FAR BETTER TO HAVE YOUR CHEF PREPARE US A FINAL MEAL TO REMEMBER. VERBAL SWORDPLAY OVER CHATEAUBRIAND ? THE TENSION AND SUBTEXT WILL BE AS DELICIOUS AS THE FARE.
YOU'LL EXPLAIN YOUR BRILLIANT SCHEME FOR WORLD CONQUEST, TO IMPRESS ME AND BECAUSE WE'RE DEAD ANYWAY, SO WHERE'S THE HARM?
AND, FINALLY, YOU'LL STAKE ME TO THE BEACH AT LOW TIDE, OR STRAP ME TO A GOLDEN TABLE WITH A LASER POINTED AT ME KNACKERS OR SOMESUCH
- BECAUSE YOU'VE RAISED KILLING TO AN ART FORM
WERE I A CONNOISEUR OF THE BAROQUE, PERHAPS I'D ENGAGE IN SUCH MELODRAMA
BUT I AM A MAN OF SCIENCE, MISTER BASILDON
ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE PRINCIPLE KNOWN AS "OCKHAM'S RAZOR"?
NO ?
I'VE ALSO HEARD IT EXPRESSED AS THE K.I.S.S. PHILOSOPHY
"KISS" ?
K.I.S.S. IT'S AN ACRONYM
Oh, NO


"KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID"
GUKH

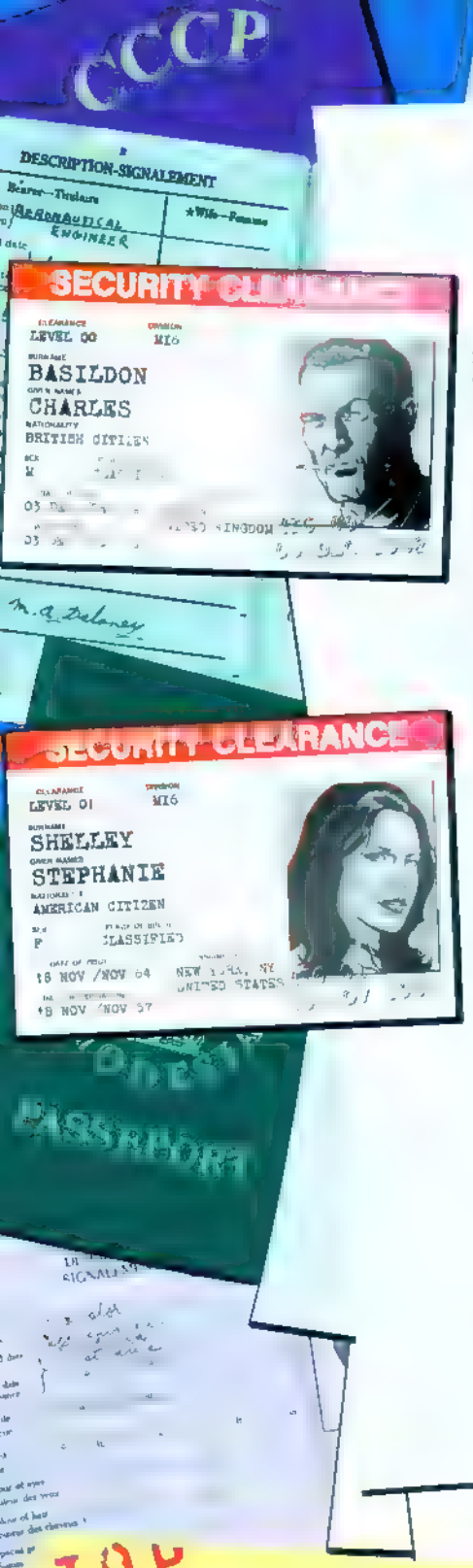

HUKK

STEPHANIE ?
*

YOU'RE *RIGHT*, BENITO. THAT *WAS* ANTICLIMACTIC
WHAT WOULD IT'VE HURT TO *HEED* BASILDON'S ADVICE. TAKE MY TIME, *SAVOR* THE EXPERIENCE ?

"DINNER AND A LITTLE CHIT-CHAT NEVER KILLED ANYONE "

Negation WAR PREVIEW INSIDE!
KISS KISS BANG BANG™
CrossGen
#4 MAY 2004
BEDARD
PERKINS
HENNESSY
VILLARI



TOP SECRET

28th October, 1965
TO: Prime Minister Harold Wilson
FROM: Sir Robin Pilchard, Director MI6
RE: Basildon mission/Pippa Westlake

I regret to inform you that our top agent, Charles **Basildon**, and his new understudy, Field Agent Stephanie Shelley, have failed to report from their covert action against the international criminal, Lazarus Bale. A recovery team has been dispatched, and we await their findings, but I must confess that Basildon's prospects look dim. I shall update you immediately with any new developments.

I must also broach the topic of Lord Colin Westlake's daughter, **Philippa**, whose continued discipline problems lead me to conclude that she must be transferred out of field agent status, and perhaps released from MI6 entirely. While I am certain that nothing would please Lord Westlake more than to know his little girl is out of harm's way, I anticipate Pippa's response will be somewhat more caustic.

Your Faithful Servant,

Sir Robin Pilchard

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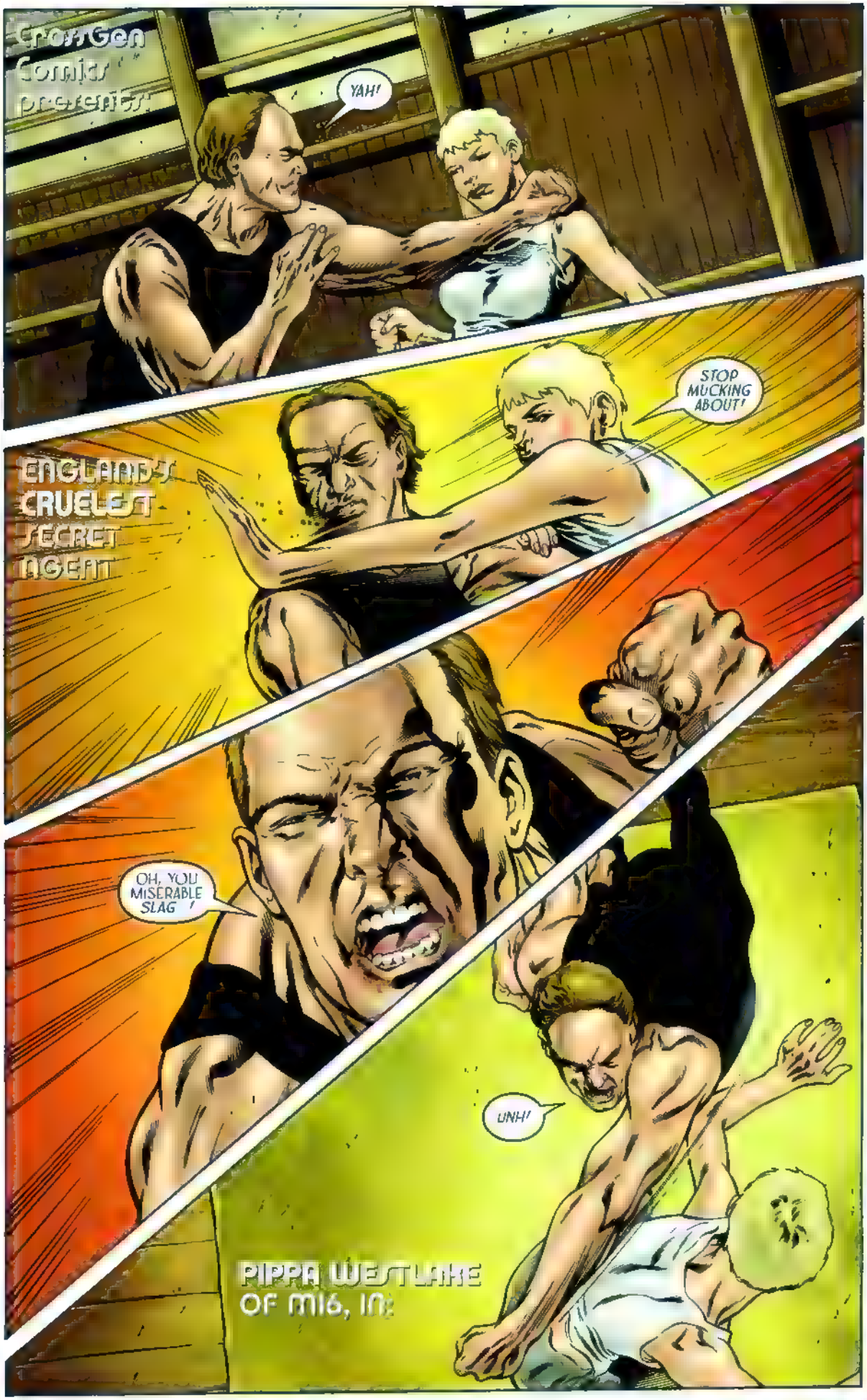
"Swinging" London
1965
" NOW IT'S TIME TO PUT SOME OF WHAT I'VE TAUGHT YOU TO USE"
Carnaby Street
MI6 Command Post
(Secret Entrance)
WESTLAKE, YOU AND O'BANNON DEMONSTRATE A TAKEDOWN IN THE STYLE OF WU SHU
I WANT EVERYONE TO SEE THAT WITH THE PROPER TECHNIQUE, IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE HOW MUCH BIGGER YOUR OPPONENT IS
NOT TO WORRY PIPPA I'LL GO EASY ON YOU
DON'T YOU DARE O'BANNON


CrossGen Comics presents:
YAH!
STOP MUCKING ABOUT!
ENGLAND'S CRUELEST SECRET AGENT
OH, YOU MISERABLE SLAG!
UNH!
PIPPA WESTLAKE OF MI6, IN:

KISS KISS
BANG
BANG
words
TONY
BEDARD
pictures
MIKE
PERKINS
inks
ANDREW
HENNESSY
colors
LAURA
VILLARI
letters
DAVE
LANPHEAR
AIIIEEE!

YOU'VE BROKEN HIS SODDING KNEE, Y'DAFT HARPY!!
THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A TRAINING EXERCISE! HELL, THAT WASN'T EVEN WU SHU!
I TOLD HIM NOT TO GO EASY ON ME
BUT THERE ARE RULES TO SPARRING
THE DEVIL TAKE YOUR RULES! IF ANYONE ELSE WANTS A GO AT ME, YOU'D BEST NOT HOLD BACK I CERTAINLY SHANT!
AGENT WESTLAKE YOU HAVE JUST COST THE FIRM MILLIONS OF POUNDS!
SIR ?
O'BANNON HAD THREE ONGOING OPERATIONS BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN THAT I SHALL NOW BE FORCED TO SCRAP, ALL BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO PULL A PUNCH!

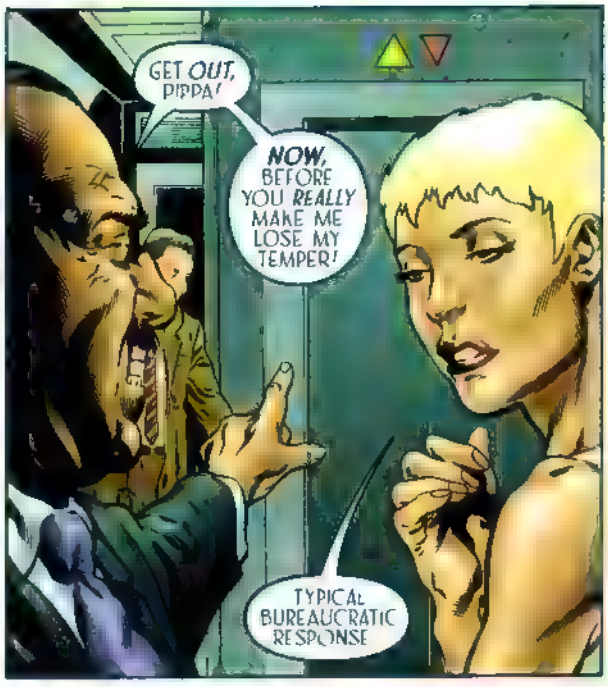
WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME SIDE HERE, PIPPA!
DIRECTOR PILCHARD, I--
SHUT UP!
WE STRIVE EACH DAY TO FUNCTION AS A TEAM, BUT YOU SEEM HELL-BENT TO PROVE YOU AREN'T A TEAM PLAYER--!
PERHAPS I SHOULD SIMPLY SEND YOU HOME.
LORD WESTLAKE WAS NONE TOO THRILLED BY HIS ONLY DAUGHTER'S CAREER CHOICE TO BEGIN WITH
Ooohhhhh
TERRIBLY SORRY, SIR, BUT THIS CAME IN FOR YOU VIA TELETYPE
THAT CAN WAIT, BRYCE
NO, SIR, IT PROBABLY CAN'T
WHAT COULD BE SO BLOODY URGENT?
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! I HAVE A VERY SAD ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE

OUR TOP MAN IN THE FIELD, SIR CHARLES BASILDON, AND HIS NEW PARTNER, AGENT STEPHANIE SHELLEY.
..WENT MISSING ON A MISSION TO CAPTURE THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL, LAZARUS BALE.
I HAVE JUST RECEIVED WORD FROM THE RESCUE TEAM WE SENT TO THEIR LAST KNOWN LOCATION, ON THE ISLE OF LANZAROTE
THE PLACE WAS ABANDONED, BUT THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF GUNPLAY, MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF BLOOD ON THE FLOOR, AND A PAIR OF CREMATED CORPSES
THE BLOOD TYPE MATCHED BASILDON'S BOTH HE AND AGENT SHELLEY ARE PRESUMED DEAD
THE LINE HAS BEEN BROKEN THE BASILDON PROJECT IS OVER ENGLAND'S GREATEST SECRET WEAPON IS NO MORE
IT WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED THIS WAY IF YOU'D MADE THE RIGHT DECISION TO BEGIN WITH!
WHAT DID YOU SAY ?
YOU KNEW I WANTED TO UNDERSTUDY FOR BASILDON AND YOU KNOW I AM THE MOST DANGEROUS AGENT YOU HAVE!
SO WHAT DO YOU DO ?
"YOU GIVE OUR MOST CRITICAL COUNTERINTELLIGENCE POST TO THAT GIRL! I MEAN, SHE'S PRACTICALLY A YANK!"

I SAY LUV, THAT THING'S NOT REAL, IS IT?

NOT ANOTHER WORD, WESTLAKE! YOU'RE SACKED!
WHAT?!
YOU HEARD ME

"YOU'RE FIRED!"


GET OUT, PIPPA!
NOW, BEFORE YOU REALLY MAKE ME LOSE MY TEMPER!
TYPICAL BUREAUCRATIC RESPONSE

" KILL THE MESSENGER "

ANYTHING TO KEEP FROM FACING YOUR OWN PART IN THIS

-DISASTER
AGENT SHELLEY ?!
YOU'RE ALIVE!
!

PILCHARD
KILL PILCHARD
HAS SHE GONE MAD?
JUST STAY BEHIND ME SIR!
URK
HALT, AGENT SHELLEY, OR I'LL--

-HKK-
-OOF-
AAHHHH!
-UNGH-
LET'S TRY THAT AGAIN, SHALL WE?

WAIT--
=UNGH=
=KUH=
CAN'T
STOP

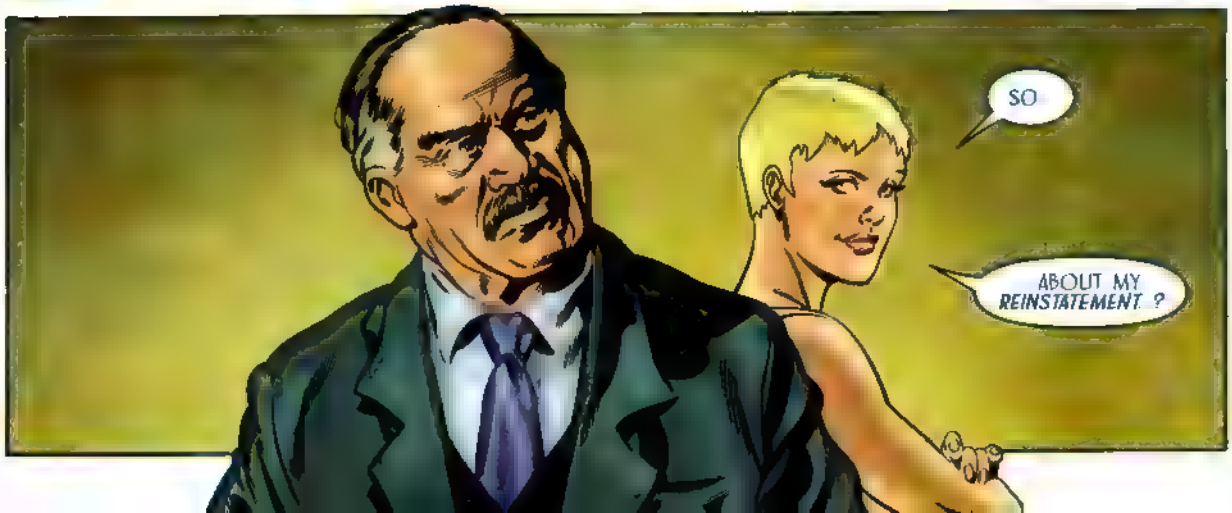
W-WAIT!
C-CAN'T STOP
DON'T WANT
KILL PILCHARD
ONLY ONE WAY
I CAN END THIS
GO AHEAD

NO!

SOMEBODY GET HER SEDATED!

BLOODY HELL, WESTGATE, COULDN'T YOU SEE WHAT SHE WAS DOING?

THE GIRL MUST'VE BEEN DRUGGED, OR BRAINWASHED--
--BUT SHE WAS WILLING TO DIE, RATHER THAN LOSE CONTROL AGAIN!


SO
ABOUT MY REINSTATEMENT ?

STEPHANIE DON'T *LEAVE* ME HERE
?
BASILDON!
DON'T LET ME *DIE* LIKE THIS
I'M SO *SORRY* I WAS ABSOLUTELY *MONSTROUS* TO YOU
NO, CHARLES *I'M* SORRY
I SHOULD'VE *KNOWN* BALE WOULD SHOOT YOU I SHOULD'VE BEEN *READY!*
HOW COULD YOU HAVE KNOWN, AGENT SHELLEY? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU COULD GET INSIDE *MY* HEAD ?
NOT IN A MILLION *YEARS* COULD YOU FATHOM MY MIND GIRL
BUT *I* GOT INSIDE *YOUR* HEAD EASILY ENOUGH
OH YES I GOT IN AND *STAYED* THERE
NO NO

NO!
=NNE=
=NNH=
IT'S THE STRAPS, AGENT SHELLEY
WE THOUGHT IT WISE TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AFTER YOU KILLED TWO OF OUR STAFF, INJURED THREE OTHERS, AND TRIED TO KILL ME
AFTER I ? OH, GOD I REMEMBER IT NOW
.T WAS BALE, SIR LAZARUS BALE HE
HE SHOT BASILDON DEAD RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME, AND THEN HE HE
I THINK HE HYPNOTIZED ME SOMEHOW COMPELLED ME TO COME BACK HERE AND KILL YOU FOR OPPOSING HIM
WE DEDUCED AS MUCH, THOUGH WE'RE UNCERTAIN JUST HOW HE MANAGED IT
OUR BEST PSYCHOTHERAPISTS AND TOXICOLOGISTS HAVE SPENT THE LAST FEW HOURS TRYING TO "DEPROGRAMME" YOU
OH, GOD HE FORCED HIS WAY INTO MY MIND !
LIKE RAPE WORSE THAN RAPE LOOK WHAT HE MADE ME DO !
YOU SHOULD'VE LET ME SHOOT MYSELF
I WOULD HAVE DONE, BUT THE OLD MAN HAD OTHER IDEAS

AGENT WESTLAKE, ADDRESS ME AS "DIRECTOR," OR "CHIEF" IF YOU MUST THE ONLY OPERATIVE I TOLERATE CALLING ME "OLD MAN" IS BASILDON
WAS BASILDON
STEPHANIE, WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT YOU FOUND OUT ABOUT BALE SO WE CAN GO AFTER HIM
I DIDN'T GET ALL THE DETAILS. SOMETHING ABOUT SALVAGING OLD BIO-WEAPONS FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR TO CREATE A SUPER-PLAGUE
AS THE ONLY PROVIDER OF THE CURE, HE THINKS HE'LL END UP RUNNING WHAT'S LEFT OF THE HUMAN RACE
SO TELL ME WHERE HE IS, AND I'LL PUT A BULLET IN HIS HEAD
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO GET IN LINE
COME AGAIN?
I SAID YOU'LL HAVE TO QUEUE UP BEHIND ME, IF YOU WANT A CRACK AT BALE
STEPHANIE, THE LAST THING I'M GOING TO DO IS SEND YOU OUT IN THE FIELD AFTER THIS MAN THE RISK IS TOO GREAT
WHAT IF YOU'RE STILL UNDER HIS INFLUENCE? IT MAY TAKE US MONTHS TO DETERMINE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DAMAGE INFLICTED UPON YOU
LET ALONE THAT NO ONE HERE TRUSTS YOU NOW
CHIEF, I CANNOT BEGIN TO EXPLAIN HOW THIS MAN VIOLATED ME
I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO UNDERSTAND, BUT IF THERE IS AN OPERATION AGAINST BALE, I AM GOING TO LEAD IT
BECAUSE IF I DON'T FACE THIS DOWN NOW, I WILL NEVER BE GOOD FOR ANYTHING EVER AGAIN!

Belize
<HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE WAIT, PRESIDENTE?>
<YOU HAVE SOMEWHERE BETTER TO BE, MANOLO?>
<I JUST DON'T LIKE HAVING YOU EXPOSED OUT HERE LIKE THIS>
<MANOLO, THERE'S NOTHING AROUND FOR FIFTY KILOMETERS EXCEPT FOR THIS FACTORY SO UNLESS YOU'RE AFRAID A MONKEY MIGHT FLING HIS CA-CA AT ME >
<AH HERE THEY ARE NOW>
<WHERE?>
<THERE!>
¡MADRE DE DIOS. !

NICE BOAT, SEÑOR BALE
YES I SHALL HAVE TO ASK CHAIRMAN FONG HOW HE MANAGED TO LEND IT TO US WITHOUT RAISING EYEBROWS IN BEIJING
I TAKE IT YOUR DEEP-SEA SALVAGE WAS SUCCESSFUL?
COMPLETELY MY BOYS PERFORMED THE ACTUAL RETRIEVAL. THEY MAKE ME SO PROUD SOMETIMES
HOW SOON CAN WE WEAPONIZE THE SAMPLES YOU BROUGHT BACK?
I TAKE IT SHEIK AL DOURI'S "VOLUNTEERS" ARE EAGER TO MARTYR THEMSELVES?
SI
WELL, I DOUBT IT WILL TAKE MUCH MORE THAN A MONTH, BUT YOU NEVER KNOW
THE DISEASES CONTAINED IN THESE VIALS HAVEN'T SEEN THE LIGHT OF DAY FOR OVER TEN THOUSAND YEARS
STILL RESEQUENCING THESE BUGS FOR MAXIMUM CONTAGION SHOULD PROVE FAR EASIER THAN CLONING MY YOUNG DICTATORS

TEN THOUSAND YEARS !
WHAT IF THE STUFF'S GONE BAD? EVEN GERMS DIE OF OLD AGE, NO?
YOU KNOW PRESIDENTE YOU'RE RIGHT
LET'S PUT THIS TO THE TEST, SHALL WE?
<SOUND THE ALARM! SEAL ALL COMPARTMENTS!>
<THE VENTILATORS WILL SPREAD IT!>
<RELAX, GENTLEMEN>
< YOU'RE SAFE OUT HERE >
¡AKK<
AIIEEE!
CONYO, BALE
¡ERES UN HOMBRE MALCREADO !

GUKH HUGHHH GAKKH
MISSED A HATCH
GAHHH--
LO SIENTO, PRESIDENTE I'D HOPED TO CONTAIN THE MESS INSIDE THE SUB
WITH THAT FELLOW DISSOLVING IN YOUR BAY, YOU WON'T WANT TO BE EATING ANY FISH YOU CATCH AROUND HERE
EVER
BUT WON'T FONG BE UPSET WHEN HE FINDS OUT YOU MURDERED HIS CREW?
THEY HAD TO DIE ANYWAY-- THEY'D ALREADY SEEN TOO MUCH.
BESIDES, THERE'S A BILLION MORE SAILORS WHERE THOSE CAME FROM
"THIS ENTIRE SITUATION IS MOST IRREGULAR, AND IT HAS FORCED ME TO CONSIDER MEASURES THAT I NEVER WOULD HAVE COUNTENANCED IN THE PAST."

AS THE CURRENT UNDERSTUDY TO OUR TOP SPY, YOU ARE IN LINE TO BECOME THE SIXTH AGENT CODE-NAMED "BASILDON" AND THE FIRST FEMALE TO HOLD THE POST
.. BUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU WERE COMPROMISED BY BALE, AND THE ATTACK YOU CARRIED OUT ON THIS FACILITY, HAVE RENDERED YOUR PROMOTION OUT OF THE QUESTION

I UNDERSTAND, SIR
I'M NOT FINISHED
UNDER ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, I WOULD CANCEL THE BASILDON PROGRAMME AND KEEP YOU UNDER MEDICAL OBSERVATION TO ENSURE THAT BALE'S INFLUENCE HAS TRULY BEEN PURGED

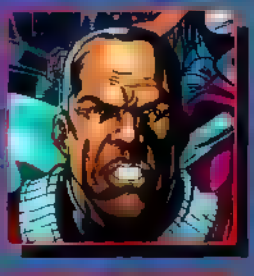
BUT THESE ARE NOT OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. BALE IS AN ONGOING THREAT, AND THE U.K. NEEDS BASILDON NOW MORE THAN EVER
SO YOU ARE GOING TO REMAIN THE UNDERSTUDY, AND YOU ARE GOING TO LEAD A NEW BASILDON ON THE HUNT FOR LAZARUS BALE

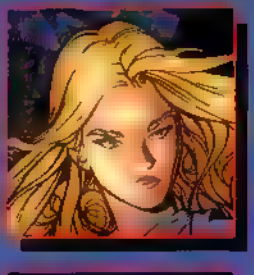
MISS POUNDSTONE? SEND IN OUR NEWEST TOP SPY
RIGHT AWAY, SIR

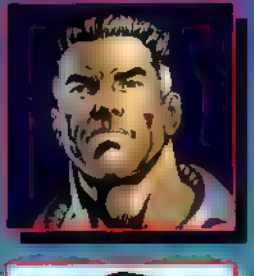
NO
AFRAID SO, SHELLEY

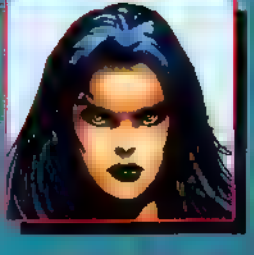
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE AGENT *CHARLIE* BASILDON
YOU TWO ARE TO GO AFTER BALE *IMMEDIATELY*, AND DO NOT RETURN UNTIL YOU HAVE THE MURDEROUS BLIGHTER IN *CHAINS*
DON'T WAIT UP FOR US *OLD MAN*

FREE SNEAK PEEK ON THE NEXT 6 PAGES!









IT'S FINALLY HERE!

After four years of build-up, the mad god-emperor Charon is leading his frightful forces on an all-out invasion of our universe! Standing against them: the Sigil-Bearers you know and love! Writer Tony Bedard, penciler Paul Pelletier, inker Dave Meikis, and colorist Laura Martin present NEGATION WAR... IT ALL COMES DOWN TO THIS!

WHEN THE WAR FINALLY CAME, EVEN THOSE WHO HAD BEEN PREPARED WERE CAUGHT OFF GUARD
MORNING, TAYLOR
WORLD'S GREATEST DAD
GOOD MORNING JACKIE
TOMMY STILL HAVE THE SNIFFLES?
HE'S BETTER, BUT CAROL'S KEEPING HIM HOME TODAY JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE YOU KNOW HOW OVER-PROTECTIVE SHE CAN BE
Mm-hm GUESS IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY
Um I'M NOT SURE I FOLLOW YOU
Oh I THINK YOU DO
WE MISSED YOU AT THE COMPANY DINNER LAST NIGHT YOU DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT NOT SHOWING
NOT TOO BUSY BEING "OVER PROTECTIVE," WERE YOU ?
Tri-City Tribune
CRASH AVERTED BY MIGHTY-MAN

NO
SOMETHING CAME UP
SOMETHING ALWAYS "COMES UP" WITH YOU, TAY!

THOOOM
ZARK
KROOM
ZARK
ZARK
WHOOOSH!

PLEASE I HAVE A WIFE
DID YOU KISS HER GOODBYE THIS MORNING?
Y-YES
THAT'S NICE...
GARCIA

FAN OUT AND SECURE THE CITY CENTER! SLAY ANYTHING THAT MOVES!
ALL UNITS! STERILIZE THE L.Z. OUT TO A SIX KLIK RADIUS!
I'D LIKE TO GET THE MOOD JUST RIGHT AROUND HERE BEFORE HE ARRIVES...
=WHULP=
KRAKOOM
EXCELLENT. YOU SAVED ME THE TROUBLE OF FINDING YOU.

WHOEVER YOU PEOPLE ARE...
...YOU JUST PICKED THE *WRONG PLANET* TO MESS WITH!
PART ONE
NEGATION WAR
ON SALE NOW!